

8. Transfers of major conventional weapons

SIEMON T. WEZEMAN and PIETER D. WEZEMAN

I. Introduction

The global SIPRI trend-indicator value of international transfers of major conventional weapons for 1997 was 12 per cent higher than that for 1996.¹ The trend-indicator value for 1997 was \$25 156 million at constant (1990) prices, up from the value of \$22 542 million for 1996.² As figure 8.1 shows, there has been a clear trend of increasing arms transfers since 1994, when the trend-indicator value stood at \$20 231 million, the lowest since 1970. The figure for 1997 is 24 per cent higher than that for 1994, but only 62 per cent of the value of \$40 582 million for 1987, when arms transfers reached their highest level since 1950.

Section II of this chapter highlights some of the most important developments in 1997 and surveys the dominant trends among the exporters and importers of major conventional weapons. Section III focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa as a recipient of arms in the light of continuing warfare in the region, which has suffered some of the most violent conflicts since 1945. A brief report on international arms embargoes is given in section IV.

Section V examines the transparency of arms transfer data in government publications. Since the early 1990s, increased transparency has featured prominently on the agenda of several governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In 1997 a number of governments began or promised to begin publishing details, and others agreed to publish more comprehensive details, of arms transfers from their respective countries. A group of government experts evaluated the first five years of operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) with a view to recommending further steps in its development. The results of this 1997 review and an evaluation of the 1996 reports to the UNROCA are also presented in section V.

¹ The index produced using the SIPRI valuation system enables the aggregation of data on physical arms transfers. The SIPRI system for evaluating arms transfers was designed as a *trend-measuring device*, to permit the measurement of changes in the total flow of major weapons and its geographical pattern. A description of the method used in calculating the trend-indicator value is given in appendix 8C. A more extensive description of the SIPRI Arms Transfers Project methodology, including a list of sources used and examples of calculations, is available on the SIPRI Internet website, URL <<http://www.sipri.se/projects/armstrade/atmethods.html>>.

² The figures for years before 1997 differ from those given in previous SIPRI Yearbooks. The SIPRI database on arms transfers is constantly updated as new data become available, and the trend-indicator values are revised each year. For this reason it is advisable for readers who require time series data for periods before the years covered in this Yearbook to contact SIPRI.

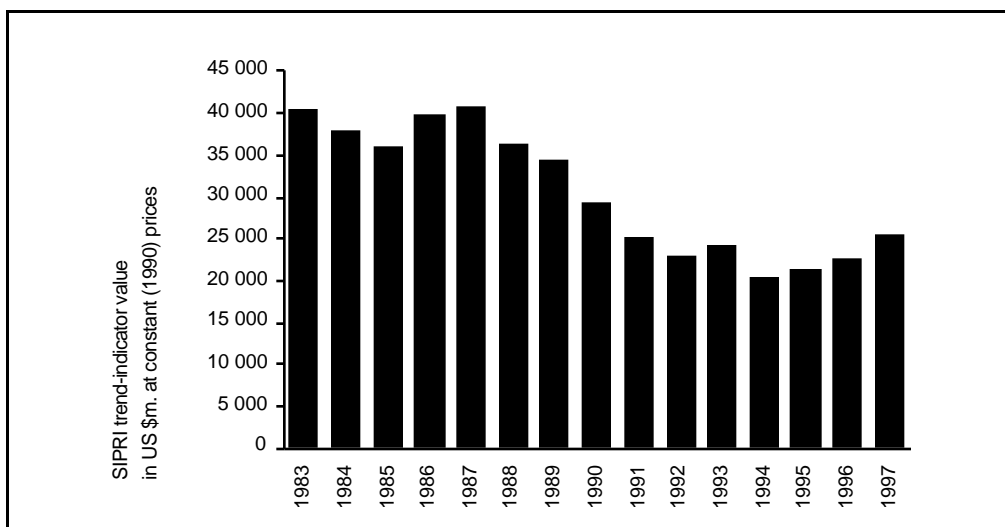


Figure 8.1. The trend in transfers of major conventional weapons, 1983–97

II. Main developments in 1997

According to the arms export guidelines of many supplier countries, human rights violations in a recipient country are one of the reasons for following a restrictive arms transfer policy. Internationally agreed guidelines such as those of the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Permanent Five (P5) members of the United Nations Security Council also follow this principle.³ While the principle of restraints on arms transfers to countries with poor human rights records is unquestioned, all these guidelines are open to interpretation by national governments and there is little agreement among the main supplier countries as to when restraints are called for or how far they should go. Because the economic advantages of arms exports seem to take priority for some countries, decision makers in the more restrained countries might have serious misgivings in cases where emphasizing the human rights records of potential buyers might lead to the loss of orders.

There were two clear cases in 1997 when refusals to deliver weapons to countries that had abused human rights led would-be buyers to seek and find willing suppliers elsewhere. Turkey cancelled a \$150 million order for US AH-1W combat helicopters and part of an order for medium transport helicopters after the US Congress repeatedly denied export permission on the grounds of human rights abuses in Turkey. A \$430 million order for transport helicopters was instead awarded to French Eurocopter, and Turkish officials warned that any future US stalling on export permissions would probably lead

³ Anthony, I. *et al.*, 'The trade in major conventional weapons', *SIPRI Yearbook 1992: World Armaments and Disarmament* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1992), pp. 295–96; and Anthony, I. *et al.*, 'Arms production and arms trade', *SIPRI Yearbook 1993: World Armaments and Disarmament* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993), p. 461. The 1991 P5 Guidelines for Conventional Arms Transfers and the 1993 OSCE Criteria on Conventional Arms Transfers are reproduced in Anthony, I. (ed.), *SIPRI, Russia and the Arms Trade* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), pp. 233–53.

Turkey to look elsewhere.⁴ In a similar case, US criticism of Indonesia's human rights and democracy records led Indonesia to cancel a planned order for 9 F-16 fighter/ground attack (FGA) aircraft and other weapons and to opt for a \$1 billion Russian package, which included 12 Su-30M FGA aircraft.⁵

European cooperation in the development and production of major systems experienced a new set-back in 1997. The European Future Large Aircraft (FLA) military transport aircraft programme was partly undermined when Italy placed a \$1.2 billion order for 18 C-130J transport aircraft from the USA, following the lead of the UK, which had ordered 55 of these aircraft in 1996.

In a move that seems consistent with the increasing interest among developing and newly industrialized countries in the only 'stealth' item available on the market, both Indonesia and Singapore placed orders for submarines.⁶ Indonesia bought two second-hand Type-206 submarines from Germany (originally five were ordered, but after the financial crash in Indonesia three were cancelled or postponed), and Singapore bought four second-hand Sjöormen Class submarines from Sweden. Their delivery will raise the total number of submarines owned by South-East Asian countries from two to eight.

The suppliers of major conventional weapons

The list of the leading suppliers of major conventional weapons was largely unchanged for 1997. As in 1996, the USA was by far the largest supplier, with Russia ranking second. For 1997 alone France was the third largest supplier, followed by the UK, but for 1993–97 overall Britain's share of weapon exports was higher than that of France (see table 8.1). Of the six major suppliers, France, the UK and the USA all exported more weapons, while China, Germany and Russia exported fewer weapons than in 1996. Together these countries accounted for nearly 84 per cent of all deliveries in 1997.

The remaining 16 per cent of international transfers of major conventional weapons was accounted for by 29 smaller suppliers.⁷ Exports from these suppliers are mainly based on a limited number of designs, mostly in areas not well covered by any of the major suppliers. Some were nonetheless involved in major deals or recorded significant changes in percentage terms, mostly because of occasional large deals that are very time-limited. An example of a country that suddenly moved up the SIPRI list of suppliers is Spain, which experienced a 546 per cent increase in exports for 1997 as compared with

⁴ 'Turkey will pick Eurocopter if Seahawk buy stalls', *Defense News*, 10–16 Feb. 1997, p. 20; *Rotor & Wings*, Jan. 1997, p. 10; and 'US-Turk spat buoys Russian exporters', *Defense News*, 3–9 Mar. 1997, pp. 3 and 26.

⁵ 'No meddling', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 19 June 1997, pp. 16–17. At least part of the Russian deal was postponed after the fall of the Rupiah, however (see also below).

⁶ Foxwell, D., 'Sub proliferation sends navies diving for cover', *Jane's International Defense Review*, Aug. 1997, pp. 30–39.

⁷ In addition to the 6 major and 21 smaller suppliers shown in table 8.1 to have exported weapons in 1997, 8 other countries—Austria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates and Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)—exported major conventional weapons in 1997.

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1996. This was mainly the result of one high-value delivery which is unlikely to be repeated—that of an aircraft-carrier to Thailand.

Table 8.1. The 30 leading suppliers of major conventional weapons, 1993–97

The list includes only countries with aggregate exports of \$100 million or more for 1993–97. The countries are ranked according to 1993–97 aggregate exports. Figures are trend-indicator values expressed in US \$m. at constant (1990) prices.

Rank		Supplier	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1993–97
1993–97	1992–96 ^a							
1	1	USA	12 504	10 434	9 823	9 528	10 840	53 129
2	2	Russia	3 541	1 117	3 218	3 904	3 466	15 246
3	4	UK	1 585	1 506	1 726	1 975	2 631	9 423
4	5	France	898	704	811	2 004	3 343	7 760
5	3	Germany	1 562	2 392	1 255	1 399	569	7 177
6	6	China	1 108	687	887	679	170	3 531
7	7	Netherlands	351	502	381	440	504	2 178
8	8	Italy	353	289	338	393	408	1 781
9	9	Canada	220	365	434	239	81	1 339
10	14	Spain	94	260	120	117	639	1 230
11	11	Israel	186	140	237	260	335	1 158
12	12	Ukraine	127	189	188	192	399	1 095
13	10	Czech Republic	267	377	193	137	19	993
14	13	Sweden	58	59	179	315	273	884
15	24	Moldova	–	175	–	–	392	567
16	16	Korea, North	422	48	48	21	–	539
17	17	Uzbekistan	–	238	272	–	–	510
18	19	Belgium	–	20	296	69	93	478
19	25	Belarus	–	8	24	129	263	424
20	32	Australia	30	24	22	10	318	404
21	21	Norway	93	186	54	9	56	398
22	18	Poland	–	130	185	61	18	394
23	15	Switzerland	79	37	90	107	72	385
24	20	Slovakia	151	28	85	91	–	355
25	23	Brazil	26	38	40	28	28	160
26	29	Qatar	49	51	15	–	29	144
27	27	Japan	15	16	16	86	3	136
28	31	Korea, South	28	8	41	22	12	111
29	26	South Africa	54	10	10	33	1	108
30	33	Indonesia	25	25	38	–	13	101
		Others ^b	173	168	245	294	181	1 061
		Total	23 999	20 231	21 271	22 542	25 156	113 199

^a The rank order for suppliers in 1992–96 differs from that published in the *SIPRI Yearbook 1997* (p. 268) because of the subsequent revision of figures for these years.

^b Includes 32 countries with aggregate 1993–97 exports of less than \$100 million.

Note: The index produced using the SIPRI valuation system is not comparable to official economic statistics such as gross domestic product, public expenditure or export/import figures. To enable the aggregation of data on transfers of different types of weapon, SIPRI has created an index which gives similar values to similar weapon systems. The SIPRI system was designed as a *trend-measuring device* to permit the measurement of changes in the total flow of major weapons and its geographical pattern. For a description of the method used in calculating the trend-indicator value see appendix 8C.

Source: SIPRI arms transfers database.

The leading suppliers

In 1997 the *United States* was again by far the major supplier, accounting for 43 per cent of all major weapon deliveries. This was not a significant increase over its 42 per cent share for 1996. While its average share for 1993–97 was 47 per cent, its share of deliveries has fallen each year since 1993.

There were no remarkable changes in US arms export policies in 1997. The impact of a sale on regional stability is still an important element of the Clinton Administration's conventional arms transfer policy. However, the US Government's reactions to the plans of several South American countries to acquire advanced weapons from non-US producers showed its sensitivity to economic factors and possible infringements on what it considers to be a US market.⁸ Industry, the Department of Defense and certain members of Congress pressured the government to relax its restrictive 1977 policy on sales of advanced weapons to Latin America.⁹ By the end of 1997, US companies were allowed to market their advanced F-16 and F/A-18 FGA aircraft and, in accordance with a presidential decision of 1 August 1997, export requests for these aircraft would be considered on a case-by-case basis.¹⁰

The introduction of a 'Code of Conduct' severely limiting arms exports to countries with poor human rights records and countries with very limited transparency concerning arms imports (including those not reporting to the UNROCA) was discussed in the Congress. The House of Representatives passed a code in its version of the State Department Authorization Act, but no agreement could be reached between the House and the Senate versions of the code and the issue was omitted from the final Authorization Act.¹¹

Russia retained its second position, although its share of world exports of major conventional arms decreased from 17 per cent for 1996 to 14 per cent for 1997. Close ties to India were reaffirmed by the sale of two Kilo Class submarines and three Krivak-4 Class frigates, as well as three Ka-31 airborne early-warning (AEW) helicopters. Russia also introduced the first air-refuelling technology in South Asia by selling a number of Il-78 tanker aircraft to India. Eight Su-30M FGA aircraft were delivered to India in 1997—the first Russian export of combat aircraft more sophisticated than those used by Russia's own armed forces. China became more firmly established as one of Russia's major clients with the start of licensed production of the Su-27 FGA aircraft and final confirmation of an order for two Sovre-

⁸ In a similar but less dramatic way, the US Department of State argued very strongly against Kuwaiti plans to buy self-propelled guns from China. US State Department, Daily Press Briefing, 15 July 1997, URL <<http://www.state.gov/www/briefings/9707/970715db.html>>, version current 15 July 1997.

⁹ This policy is discussed in Anthony, I., Wezeman, P. D. and Wezeman, S. T., 'The trade in major conventional weapons', *SIPRI Yearbook 1995: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1995), pp. 497–99; and Anthony, I., Wezeman, P. D. and Wezeman, S. T., 'The trade in major conventional weapons', *SIPRI Yearbook 1997: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1997), pp. 269–71.

¹⁰ Press release from the White House, 1 Aug. 1997, URL <<http://www.clw.org/pub/clw/cat/policy.html>>, version current on 9 Mar. 1998; and 'Sharp debate likely over Latin exports', *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, 15 Sep. 1997, pp. 38–42.

¹¹ *AIA update*, vol. 2, no. 6 (Dec. 1997), URL <http://www.access.digex.net/~aia/nu2_6.html#code>, version current on 9 Mar. 1998.

menny Class destroyers. These acquisitions will mean a technological quantum leap for the Chinese forces and have already given rise to concern in the region.¹²

Russia's hopes for massive increases in arms exports were expressed in early 1997, for example, by Mikhail Timkin—first deputy director of Russia's only official arms marketing agency, Rosvooruzheniye—who even believed that Russia would bypass the USA as the main arms exporter by 1998.¹³ While this seems extremely unlikely, known orders indicate that Russia is likely to maintain its position as the second largest exporter for at least the next few years. Stagnating investment in military research and development (R&D), however, may lead to diminishing competitiveness in the field of military technology.¹⁴ Both Russian industry and the Russian military have pressured President Boris Yeltsin to relax arms export regulations, and to permit export of the newest technology, in the hope that exports of weapons will generate enough income to finance procurement for the armed forces and R&D. To some extent this is already government policy—part of the income from arms transfers has been used for R&D and for the procurement of limited numbers of advanced systems such as the Su-30, Su-37 and S-37 FGA aircraft.¹⁵

Following the changes made in 1996 in the procedures for marketing Russian arms, further changes were made in 1997. In September/October, under a cloud of corruption and charges of misuse of funds, Rosvooruzheniye was reorganized and two other organizations, PromExport and Rossiyskiye Tekhnologii, were mandated to act as agents for the industry to increase flexibility in marketing.¹⁶

France increased its share of conventional arms deliveries dramatically from 9 per cent in 1996 to 13 per cent in 1997. Deliveries of the first 24 Mirage-2000-5 FGA aircraft, associated air-to-air missiles and three La Fayette Class frigates to Taiwan, and of an estimated 76 Leclerc main battle tanks (MBTs) to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), made up 62 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively, of French exports in 1997. Continuing deliveries to these two countries alone for the next two to three years would be enough to maintain French exports at approximately the same level as in 1997.

The UK recorded a smaller increase in its share of deliveries than that of France, from 9 per cent in 1996 to 10 per cent in 1997. As in previous years, exports of ships and combat aircraft to the Persian Gulf countries and South-

¹² See, e.g., Berry, W. E., Jr, *Threat Perceptions in the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore* (US Air Force Academy, Colo, 1997).

¹³ 'Russia exports hit \$3.5b with aircraft sales', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 12 Feb. 1997, p. 4.

¹⁴ See also chapter 7 in this volume.

¹⁵ *Jane's Defence Weekly* (note 13); 'Russian Air Force is down but not out', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 19 Mar. 1997, p. 22; and Butowski, P., 'Russia plans first flight for long-awaited fighter', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 18 Feb. 1998, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Oct. 1997, p. 434. Rosvooruzheniye provides marketing support for the arms industry. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, *RFE/RL Newslines*, vol. 1, no. 113, part I (9 Sep. 1997). While some companies have the right to market weapons on their own, most preferred to use Rosvooruzheniye as their agent. In 1996 only \$100 million worth of arms exports from the Russian total of exports worth \$3.5 billion were arranged without Rosvooruzheniye. *Jane's Defence Weekly* (note 13).

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East Asia made up the bulk of British arms exports in 1997. On 28 July, British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook announced a new set of criteria for arms exports, according to which the government 'would not permit the sale of arms to regimes that might use them for internal oppression or international aggression'. The new criteria would stop the export of equipment 'which has obvious application for internal repression, in cases where the recipient country has a significant confirmed record of repression'.¹⁷ At the same time, however, the government committed itself to 'a strong and successful defence industry' and maintaining 'its leading position'.¹⁸ With the exception of some export licence refusals to Indonesia, regarding equipment for internal security, by early 1998 this new policy did not seem to have changed much in the usual practice of British arms exports.¹⁹

Germany's share of arms exports decreased significantly, from 6 per cent of the world total for 1996 to just over 2 per cent for 1997. During 1990–96 Germany exported large quantities of surplus weapons from its own stocks or from those inherited from the former German Democratic Republic, but by 1997 these stocks were largely exhausted. About half of all German arms exports in 1990–96 consisted of surplus equipment. Deliveries of Leopard-2 MBTs to Sweden and MEKO-200 Type frigates to Australia, Greece and Turkey tipped the balance in favour of new systems in 1997, when surplus equipment made up only 30 per cent of total deliveries, but German arms exports were much reduced overall.

The decrease in arms transfers by *China* was even more remarkable. While China was still ranked as the sixth largest supplier for the period 1993–97, it exported 75 per cent fewer weapons in 1997 than in 1996. China's efforts to compete with other suppliers by offering cheap weapons have met with little success. It seems that even the poorer countries no longer want the old technology embodied in Chinese designs, and they are also put off by the often shoddy workmanship encountered in Chinese weapons.²⁰ While unable to compete with other countries in terms of technology, China remained one of the few suppliers that did not yield to US pressure to refrain from deliveries to Iran, and it was also Pakistan's main ally and supplier. Exports to Iran and Pakistan accounted for 51 per cent of total Chinese deliveries for the period 1993–97. However, according to US Government sources, in October 1997 and in early 1998 China seemed to be bowing to US pressure and promising restraint in its arms transfers to Iran, in particular those of advanced anti-ship missiles.²¹ China denied having made such a promise, however.²²

¹⁷ 'Foreign Secretary announces criteria to ensure responsible arms trade', *FCO Daily Bulletin*, 28 July 1997, URL <<http://www.fco.gov.uk/texts/1997/jul/28/bulletin.txt>>, version current on 9 Mar. 1998.

¹⁸ *FCO Daily Bulletin* (note 17).

¹⁹ 'Approval for Jakarta defence deals likely', *Financial Times*, 3 Oct. 1997, p. 9.

²⁰ Even major client Pakistan would consider buying the latest Chinese combat aircraft, the Super-7, only for a 'second line of defence'. Reuters, 'Pakistan airchief says India's planes have the edge', URL <<http://customnews.cnn.com/cnews>>, version current on 19 Jan. 1998.

²¹ AP, 'China vows to halt cruise missile shipments to Iran', 18 Oct. 1997; 'Cohen Finds Progress in China Ties', *International Herald Tribune*, 21 Jan. 1998, p. 6; and Voice of America, URL <<gopher://>

The recipients of major conventional weapons

The data on arms importers in 1997 tend to reinforce the main trends identified in the past few years. As can be seen in table 8A.1, three regions—Asia, Europe and the Middle East—remain the predominant markets for exported major conventional weapons.²³ However, the relative importance of these regions is changing. As a share of the total the demand from European countries has decreased, while that from Asian, particularly North-East Asian, countries has grown.

Among the importers, the 10 leading recipients for 1993–97—Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Turkey, Egypt, South Korea, China, Japan, India, Greece and Kuwait—remained the same as for 1992–96, with only an internal change in ranking. Together these countries accounted for 52 per cent of world arms imports for the period and for 57 per cent in 1997.

Asia and Oceania

For the period 1988–97 the share of deliveries of major conventional weapons to Asian countries rose from 31 per cent to 49 per cent. In Asia, in particular North-East Asia, several countries initiated programmes in the early 1990s which are now being reflected in the data on equipment deliveries.

In 1997 *North-East Asia* accounted for nearly 30 per cent of global imports, with three of the five countries of the region—China, South Korea and Taiwan—being among the top 10 recipients.²⁴ The most important deliveries included a third Kilo Class submarine and the first licence-built Su-27 FGA aircraft for China; 24 Mirage-2000-5 and 24 F-16A-MLU FGA aircraft, 3 La Fayette and 2 Perry Class frigates for Taiwan; and the first licence-produced F-16C/D FGA aircraft for South Korea.

In *South-East Asia*, Malaysia took delivery of two Lekiu Class frigates and eight F/A-18 FGA aircraft, while Thailand received the aircraft-carrier *Chakri Naruebet* (the first for an East Asian country since 1945) and related Harrier (AV-8A) FGA aircraft from Spain.

In *South Asia*, adversaries India and Pakistan maintained high levels of arms imports. While India has been trying to produce indigenous tanks and combat aircraft, its programmes have encountered technical problems, forcing the country for the time being to continue licensed production of Russian T-72 tanks and import of Russian Su-30M FGA aircraft. Pakistan's much smaller

gopher.voa.gov:70/00/newswire/mon/CHINA_CRUISE_MISSILES-L>, version current on 19 Jan. 1998.

²² 'China vows to continue arms sales', United Press Institute, 20 Jan. 1998, URL <http://biz.yahoo.com/upi/98/01/20/international_news/chinacohe_1.html>, version current on 20 Jan. 1998.

²³ Demand for major conventional weapons is heavily concentrated in North America and Western Europe, where it is largely covered by domestic procurement rather than international transfers. The countries included in each region are listed in appendix 8A in this volume.

²⁴ For a discussion of the implications of defence modernization by China and Taiwan, see Gill, B. and Bitzinger, R., *Gearing up for High-Tech Warfare? Chinese and Taiwanese Defense Modernization and Implications for Military Confrontation across the Taiwan Strait, 1995–2005*, CAPS paper no. 11 (Chinese Council of Advanced Policy Studies: Taipei, 1996). See also Arnett, E. (ed.), SIPRI, *Military Capacity and the Risk of War: China, India, Pakistan and Iran* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1997).

production facilities also seem to be facing problems in the development of the Al Khalid tank, leaving Pakistan no option but to import the Chinese Type-85-IIM and the more modern Ukrainian T-80UD tanks.

Most North-East and South-East Asian countries, notably Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, saw their currencies lose significantly against the US dollar during the closing months of 1997, in many cases by between 35 and 70 per cent, with further major losses in early 1998. While this did not affect arms transfers in 1997, several countries postponed acquisitions or even cancelled important orders. Thailand is trying to pull out of a \$390 million deal for eight F/A-18 FGA aircraft; Malaysia postponed and slimmed down its acquisition of up to 27 light frigates, combat helicopters and armoured vehicles; Indonesia cut parts of its planned \$1 billion purchases from Russia; and South Korea postponed the purchase of four airborne early-warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft and may acquire a cheaper aircraft than the planned new heavy FGA aircraft.²⁵

Other regions: Europe and the Middle East

The *European* share of world imports of major conventional weapons declined from 33 per cent in 1993 to 19 per cent in 1997. Reduced procurement expenditure by many European countries after 1990 has led to the slowing down, postponement or deferment of equipment modernization programmes, which has had a major impact on arms imports.

Deliveries of weapons to Central and East European countries were limited to less than 1 per cent of the world total. In 1996 three of the Visegrad countries—the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland—published in broad outline their equipment priorities, and in 1997 these countries were invited to become members of NATO. By early 1998 neither of these events had led to the signature of major contracts, but US and European companies had strengthened their positions by forming partnerships with Czech, Hungarian and Polish companies, especially (but not only) in preparation for the competition for the most important planned acquisition, that of new fighter aircraft to replace those of Soviet design.²⁶

The share of deliveries to the *Middle East* remained constant at around 20–25 per cent of the world total. The positions of Egypt, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on the list of importers of major conventional weapons for the period 1993–97 are little changed. There were some noteworthy deliveries in 1997 to the smaller arms-importing countries in the region. The UAE took delivery of the first of two refitted ex-Dutch Navy Kortenaer Class frigates ordered in 1996 as a direct reaction to Iran's acquisition of Russian Kilo Class submarines.²⁷

²⁵ *Air Letter*, 2 Feb. 1998, p. 1; 'Cash crisis threatens Southeast Asian arms market', Inter Press Service/CNN, 9 Jan. 1998; and 'Arms makers scramble to keep Asia contracts', *International Herald Tribune*, 14 Jan. 1998, p. 7. See also chapter 6 in this volume.

²⁶ 'Boeing has big plans for Aero Vodochody', *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, 16 June 1997, p. 61; 'Selling arms to Central Europe', *The Economist*, 8 Nov. 1997 (via CDI listserv); and 'Aircraft groups swoop on new markets', *Financial Times*, 19 Aug. 1997, p. 2.

²⁷ 'UAE defence posture', *Military Technology*, Apr. 1993, p. 32.

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The developing arms trade relations between Israel and Turkey are also noteworthy. After awarding a \$650 million contract for upgrading 54 F-4E

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Table 8.2. The 72 leading recipients of major conventional weapons, 1993–97

The list includes only countries with aggregate imports of \$100 million or more for 1993–97. The countries are ranked according to 1993–97 aggregate imports. Figures are trend-indicator values expressed in US \$m. at constant (1990) prices.

Rank								
1993–97	1992–96 ^a	Recipient	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1993–97
1	1	Saudi Arabia	2 799	1 460	1 259	1 946	2 370	9 834
2	9	Taiwan	907	614	1 138	1 530	4 049	8 238
3	2	Turkey	1 983	1 373	1 253	1 127	1 276	7 012
4	3	Egypt	1 267	1 941	1 680	937	867	6 692
5	6	Korea, South	482	642	1 553	1 591	1 077	5 345
6	8	China	1 097	341	697	1 102	1 816	5 053
7	5	Japan	1 580	703	1 021	666	584	4 554
8	7	India	582	468	1 062	1 231	1 085	4 428
9	4	Greece	991	1048	947	248	715	3 949
10	10	Kuwait	650	45	962	1 323	411	3 391
11	14	UAE	751	636	475	684	808	3 354
12	13	Thailand	135	835	688	522	1 031	3 211
13	21	Malaysia	17	448	1 143	199	1 346	3 153
14	15	Pakistan	825	719	225	644	572	2 985
15	16	USA	639	504	499	478	656	2 776
16	17	Iran	1149	295	223	514	11	2 192
17	11	Germany	1246	649	161	108	–	2 164
18	18	Spain	361	625	384	409	316	2 095
19	19	Finland	564	189	155	574	492	1 974
20	22	Indonesia	267	600	359	547	171	1 944
21	12	Israel	613	829	233	54	41	1 770
22	27	Brazil	38	235	238	562	384	1 457
23	24	Hungary	1 190	4	67	135	–	1 396
24	25	Australia	420	303	71	304	215	1 313
25	26	Chile	127	166	536	220	180	1 229
26	32	Italy	137	131	168	222	552	1 210
27	20	Canada	213	519	182	171	97	1 182
28	29	Oman	66	201	175	326	173	941
29	31	Switzerland	77	117	106	199	391	890
30	28	Portugal	364	431	15	3	14	827
31	38	Peru	77	142	92	166	258	735
32	33	Singapore	88	170	214	118	108	698
33	37	Myanmar	308	–	283	–	100	691
34	30	Netherlands	114	218	77	185	93	687
35	43	Qatar	15	14	15	349	286	679
36	35	Norway	125	78	118	168	155	644
37	45	Kazakhstan	–	–	–	408	172	580
38	40	Viet Nam	–	–	265	224	84	573
39	39	Algeria	15	161	332	5	–	513
40	44	Sweden	20	220	84	45	123	492
41	47	Argentina	65	148	85	44	148	490
42	23	UK	64	38	92	216	71	481
43	41	Slovakia	211	3	228	36	–	478
44	42	Armenia	8	310	51	106	–	475
45	46	Morocco	98	129	40	89	104	460

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Rank		Recipient	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1993–97
1993–97	1992–96 ^a							
46	64	New Zealand	48	16	4	18	343	429
47	50	Mexico	125	92	43	63	96	419
48	34	France	138	26	65	30	160	419
49	60	Colombia	22	39	95	39	190	385
50	53	Cyprus	–	61	29	177	110	377
51	51	Sri Lanka	36	56	77	144	41	354
52	48	Yemen	–	205	142	–	–	347
53	49	Denmark	38	80	129	53	46	346
54	36	Syria	194	63	43	21	–	321
55	54	Bahrain	–	14	38	219	13	284
56	52	Poland	–	6	159	117	–	282
57	67	Austria	12	56	54	14	139	275
58	57	Philippines	52	109	49	15	47	272
59	58	Bangladesh	29	89	118	4	13	253
60	55	Belgium	115	64	27	–	34	240
61	61	Angola	81	96	1	7	–	185
62	63	Tunisia	–	32	45	60	37	174
63	62	Bulgaria	–	1	–	123	40	164
64	74	Jordan	1	–	24	74	62	161
65	68	Croatia	24	–	86	2	37	149
66	66	Lebanon	38	13	40	24	10	125
67	59	South Africa	7	19	38	51	8	123
68	83	Bosnia and Herz.	–	–	–	51	68	119
69	80	Eritrea	–	18	1	38	53	110
70	73	Cambodia	–	61	–	47	–	108
71	65	Nigeria	35	72	–	–	–	107
72	56	Romania	8	45	1	35	12	101
		Others ^b	249	199	310	385	200	1 343
		Total	23 999	20 231	21 271	22 542	25 156	113 199

^a The rank order for recipients in 1992–96 differs from that published in *SIPRI Yearbook 1997* (pp. 272–73) because of the subsequent revision of figures for these years.

^b Includes 58 countries with aggregate 1993–97 imports of less than \$100 million.

Note: The index produced using the SIPRI valuation system is not comparable to official economic statistics such as gross domestic product, public expenditure or export/import figures. To enable the aggregation of data on transfers of different types of weapon, SIPRI has created an index which gives similar values to similar weapon systems. The SIPRI system was designed as a *trend-measuring device* to permit the measurement of changes in the total flow of major weapons and its geographical pattern. For a description of the method used in calculating the trend-indicator value see appendix 8C.

Source: SIPRI arms transfers database.

FGA aircraft to Israel in 1996, Turkey ordered Popeye air-to-surface missiles (ASMs) in 1997. At the same time Turkey was also discussing other projects, including more aircraft upgrades and the acquisition of tanks.²⁸

²⁸ Reuters, 'Arms deals, military ties on Israel–Turkey agenda', 7 Dec. 1997; and 'Turkey's Mid East arms ties', *The Middle East*, Feb. 1998, pp. 5–7.

III. Arms transfers to Sub-Saharan Africa

Only two of the 47 Sub-Saharan African countries (Angola and South Africa) imported weapons for more than \$100 million (SIPRI trend-indicator value) for the period 1993–97. Total arms imports by the region were only 0.5 per cent of the world total in 1997, and the yearly average of \$243 million for the period 1993–97 was the lowest for any five-year period since 1960. The strong decline in the trend after 1990 (see table 8A.1) is explained by a decrease in imports by Angola. Angola's share of the region's imports was 62 per cent for 1988–90 and had dropped to 12 per cent for the period 1991–97. As the level of imports of major conventional weapons by the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa for 1988–97 was consistently low, a few deliveries of small batches of major conventional weapons cause strong fluctuations in the time series.

After years of being a minor importer because of a UN arms embargo, the only country in Sub-Saharan Africa that is likely to become an importer of sizeable quantities of major conventional weapons is South Africa, which has serious plans to import up to 40 fighter aircraft, 4 submarines, 4 corvettes, 60 light helicopters and 150 main battle tanks for about \$2.5 billion.²⁹ If no financing problems occur and the plans materialize this would lead to a sharp rise in deliveries to South Africa in the first decade of the next century.

Arms transfers to countries in conflict

The many new and continuing conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa in the period 1993–97 have not led to significant imports of major conventional weapons.³⁰ No clear pattern or relation can be discerned between imports of major conventional weapons and the outbreak or outcome of recent conflicts in this region. The most recent conflict in which major weapons were used on an intensive scale was that in Angola, where they were used both by Angola and by South Africa in 1975–88. In other major conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa, mainly low-technology weapons and small arms are used. Most of the wars are fought on a technological level little different from that which characterized similar wars in the region in the 1960s and 1970s. Almost all the major weapons delivered in the past five years to the countries in conflict have been second-hand, the most advanced being small numbers of Mi-24 combat helicopters and six Chinese F-7M fighter aircraft. While the latter were new they represent the lowest level of fighter aircraft technology available on the market.

It is difficult to assess the importance of the few major conventional weapons being used. Most casualties are caused by small arms or by side-effects of the conflicts, and while the possession of major weapons can influence the outcome of the conflicts much depends on how they are used. The origins of smaller weapons delivered to the region are not easily traced. A few

²⁹ Campbell, K., 'South Africa seeks arms package', *Military Technology*, Nov. 1997, pp. 32–38.

³⁰ Chapter 1 in this volume lists 7 'major conflicts' in Sub-Saharan Africa during 1997. There have also been some smaller conflicts, e.g., in Chad, Comoros and Nigeria.

case studies have uncovered information indicating that small arms are being delivered from outside the region, but they also stress the importance of intra-regional transfers in which governments in the region support and supply rebel groups fighting in neighbouring countries.³¹

The arms transfer dynamics in some conflicts going on in 1993–97 in Sub-Saharan Africa for which substantial information is available are illustrated below.

Congo (Brazzaville) received three G-222 transport aircraft from Italy and three Mi-8 helicopters from Russia in 1995–96. The most recent deliveries of combat equipment were some 12 ex-Soviet MiG-21 fighter aircraft in the late 1980s. However, the only major weapons that seem to have influenced the conflict belonged not to the Congolese armed forces but to Angolan units supporting the rebels which ousted the government in 1997.³²

Probably the most significant use of major weapons in the conflict in *Rwanda* was the shooting down, with two portable SA-16 missiles, of the aircraft in which President Juvénal Habyarimana of Rwanda was travelling home in April 1994 after having reached preliminary agreements on peace at a regional summit meeting in Dar es Salaam. This incident signalled the start of the 1994 massacres. Rwanda received a small number of light armoured vehicles from France in the late 1980s and about six howitzers from Egypt in the early 1990s; Rwanda's only aircraft that could perhaps be used for combat purposes were six SA-342L helicopters delivered by France in the mid-1980s, but none of these major weapons is reported to have had a discernible impact on the conflict. Information on supplies of small arms to Rwanda has been uncovered, showing the government to have been armed mainly by France, Egypt and South Africa, and the rebels by the Ugandan Government.³³

Burundi received nine M-3 armoured personnel carriers (APCs), 18 AML-60/90 armoured cars and four SA-342L helicopters from France, and four SF-260TP trainer aircraft suitable for light combat duties from Italy in the early 1980s. No further major weapons were received. As in the case of Rwanda, information on supplies of small arms has emerged, showing that there have been deliveries from several countries including some in Africa.³⁴

The conflict between the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Kinshasa (ADFL) and the Government of President Sese Seko Mobutu in *Zaire* in 1996 and 1997 led to very few transfers of major conventional weapons. There was only evidence for the transfers of some (two to four) ex-Yugoslavian Galeb light combat aircraft and a small number of Mi-24 combat helicopters from an unidentified East European source, flown by mercenaries. Some 20 Fahd APCs were delivered from Egypt in 1988–90. More substantial deliveries of armoured vehicles date from the early 1980s while the latest deliveries of jet combat aircraft (17 Mirage-5s) took place as

³¹ E.g., *Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War*, Human Rights Watch Arms Project, vol. 6, issue 1 (Jan. 1994); and *Stoking the Fires: Military Assistance, Arms Trafficking, and the Civil War in Burundi* (Human Rights Watch Arms Project: Washington, DC, 1997).

³² 'Angola assists overthrow', *Air Forces Monthly*, Mar. 1998, p. 8.

³³ *Arming Rwanda, The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War* (note 31).

³⁴ *Stoking the Fires: Military Assistance, Arms Trafficking, and the Civil War in Burundi* (note 31).

Table 8.3. Suppliers of major conventional weapons to Sub-Saharan countries engaged in conflicts, 1993–97^a

Supplier	Tanks	Armoured vehicles	Combat aircraft	Combat helicopters	Artillery	Transport aircraft and helicopters
Belarus	9	–	–	8	–	–
Bulgaria	24	50	–	–	–	–
China	–	–	6	–	–	–
Czech Republic	–	7	–	–	–	–
Italy	–	–	–	–	–	3
Kyrgyzstan	–	–	–	1	–	–
Poland	–	52	–	–	–	–
Portugal	–	–	–	–	–	4
Russia	30	218	–	–	14	(3)
Slovakia	(19)	–	–	–	40	–
South Africa	–	(19)	–	–	–	2
Spain	–	–	–	–	–	(2)
Ukraine	(64)	(6)	–	(2)	–	–
Yugoslavia	–	–	(2)	–	–	–
Unknown–	–	–	(7)	–	–	–
Total	(144)	(352)	(8)	(11)	54	(14)

() = number uncertain.

^a Angola, Burundi, Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda and Zaire. Liberia did not import any major conventional weapons during the period.

Source: SIPRI arms transfers database.

early as 1975. The limited numbers of major weapons still in service with the Zairean armed forces saw little use and did not influence the fighting in any spectacular way. Even the vulnerable railway system, used by the ADFL as a logistic system in their final offensive towards Kinshasa, did not suffer from Zairean air force attacks.³⁵ The rebels gained victory mainly with small arms. The mercenaries from Serbia were probably less well organized than those of the South African Executive Outcomes (EO) in Sierra Leone and were unable to help the Mobutu Government.

During the conflict between the government and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in *Sierra Leone*, Sierra Leone received two Mi-24V Hind-E combat helicopters in 1994–95 (its first combat aircraft) and two T-72 tanks from Belarus (although the usefulness of the tanks in this war is unclear) and 10 OT-64A SKOT APCs from Slovakia. It also leased two Mi-17 transport helicopters, which were brought in and used by Executive Outcomes. Their use, mainly by these government-hired mercenaries, is well documented³⁶ and shows how the effective use of small numbers of major weapons can have a decisive influence. Earlier small deliveries of major weapons date from the

³⁵ Boyne, S., 'The white legion in Zaire', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, June 1997, pp. 278–81.

³⁶ Hooper, J., 'Peace in Sierra Leone: a temporary outcome?', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Feb. 1997, pp. 91–94.

late 1970s. Major weapons have also been used in this conflict by Nigeria, which supported the former government with air strikes against RUF rebels using Alpha Jet fighter aircraft delivered by Germany between 1981 and 1986 and which is involved in the new military conflict in Sierra Leone.³⁷

Liberia received two transport aircraft and one small patrol craft in 1989–90, neither of which was well suited for use in the conflict. The only major weapons in the country were 20 artillery pieces bought in 1987 from Romania, but there is no evidence that they influenced the conflict in any way. Here, too, the main use of major conventional weapons was by foreign (mainly Nigerian) forces from the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) peacekeeping force.³⁸

Uganda's largest arms import since the mid-1980s took place in 1995 when it received 62 second-hand T-55 tanks from Ukraine. Further weapons and equipment were bought from South Africa in 1995, including 10 Mamba APCs, and Uganda is reported to have ordered some AB-412 helicopters with advanced night-vision equipment in 1996.³⁹ It has received several batches of major weapons in the past 20 years, including MiG-21 fighter aircraft in the late 1970s, but most of the older equipment is reported to be unserviceable.⁴⁰

The rebel forces in Uganda are reported to receive weapons from the Government of *Sudan*, while the latter accuses the Government of Uganda of supplying the Sudanese People's Liberation Army. Both governments also support rebels in other countries that would fight on their side.⁴¹

Table 8.3 gives an overview of the suppliers of major conventional weapons to the Sub-Saharan countries in which there were major conflicts during the period 1993–97. Several Central and East European countries—mainly Belarus, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine—have delivered most of the small amounts of major weapons delivered to the warring countries. While in the cold war period arms transfers were important as an instrument of foreign policy,⁴² the primary motive for the suppliers now seems to be financial.

Some of the major weapons, mainly aircraft, used in the conflicts were brought into the region by mercenaries who owned the weapons and leased them to those for whom they fought. The combination of small numbers of major weapons and the high military professionalism of the South African EO mercenaries led to important victories for the Government of Sierra Leone.

IV. International embargoes on arms transfers

In 1997 a number of countries were under international arms embargoes. Table 8.4 lists all the countries subject to partial or complete embargo on arms transfers, military services or other military related transfers during 1993–97.

³⁷ Hooper (note 36).

³⁸ United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project, *Managing Arms in Peace Processes: Liberia* (United Nations: New York and Geneva, 1996).

³⁹ *Air Force Monthly*, Jan. 1997, p. 7.

⁴⁰ *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 18 Sep. 1996, p. 17.

⁴¹ 'Uganda's three-sided war of attrition', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 25 Sep. 1996, p. 41.

⁴² See, e.g., Arlinghaus, B. E., *Arms for Africa* (Lexington Books: Lexington, Mass., 1983).

Table 8.4. Arms embargoes by international organizations in effect, 1993–97

Target	Entry into force ^a	Lifted	Legal basis	Organization
Afghanistan ^b	27 Oct. 1996	–	UNSCR 1076	UN
Afghanistan	1 Dec. 1996	–	–	EU
Bosnia and Herzegovina	..	–	–	EU
China	27 June 1989	–	–	EU
Croatia	..	–	–	EU
Haiti	30 Sep. 1991	15 Oct. 1994	–	OAS
Haiti ^c	13 Oct. 1993	15 Oct. 1994	UNSCR 841	UN
Iraq	6 Aug. 1990	–	UNSCR 661 + 687	UN
Liberia	19 Nov. 1992	–	UNSCR 788	UN
Libya	27 Jan. 1986	–	–	EU
Libya	31 Mar. 1992	–	UNSCR 748+883	UN
Myanmar	28 Oct. 1996	–	–	EU
Nigeria ^d	20 Nov. 1995	–	–	EU
Nigeria	24 Apr. 1996	–	–	Commonwealth
Rwanda	17 May 1994	17 Aug. 1995 ^e	UNSCR 918	UN
Sierra Leone	8 Oct. 1997	–	UNSCR 1132	UN
Slovenia	..	–	–	EU
Somalia	23 Jan. 1992	–	UNSCR 733	UN
South Africa ^f	4 Nov. 1977	24 May 1994	UNSCR 418	UN
Sudan	15 Mar. 1994	–	–	EU
UNITA (Angola)	25 Sep. 1993	–	UNSCR 864 + 834	UN
Yugoslavia	25 Sep. 1991	1 Oct. 1996	UNSCR 713	UN
Yugoslavia	26 Feb. 1996	–	–	EU
Zaire	7 Apr. 1993	–	–	EU

^a All non-UN embargoes are voluntary.

^b Voluntary (non-mandatory) embargo.

^c Originally imposed in June 1993, but temporarily suspended until Sep. 1993.

^d The embargo does not apply to deliveries under existing contracts.

^e The arms embargo was suspended on this date and formally ended on 1 Sep. 1996.

^f A voluntary arms embargo commenced on 7 Aug. 1963 (US Security Council Resolution [UNSCR] 181); a voluntary embargo on equipment and material for arms production on 4 Nov. 1963 (UNSCR 182); and a voluntary embargo on arms imports from South Africa on 13 Dec. 1985 (UNSCR 558).

Source: SIPRI arms transfers database.

One new UN embargo on arms exports was implemented in 1997, to force the coalition of soldiers and former rebels in Sierra Leone to reinstate the democratically elected government that they had displaced in a coup.

V. National and international transparency in transfers of conventional weapons

Official data on arms exports

Government statistics on the value of arms exports are presented in table 8.5. A time series of data illustrates trends in arms exports as recorded in official

data. SIPRI reports official data on the value of arms exports for three reasons: to make such information more accessible; to underline the lack of useful current government data and the fact that the data available are compiled in a manner that prevents comparative analysis; and, as the statistics present real values (in contrast to the SIPRI trend-indicator values), to provide an indication of the financial scale of arms exports.

The data are from official national documents, official statements or official replies to SIPRI's requests for information. Off-the-record statements by government officials are excluded since it is impossible to determine the basis of such statements. Using the SIPRI estimates of deliveries of major conventional weapons as a baseline, the countries publishing statistics together probably account for around 92 per cent of total arms exports.

Readers are cautioned in using these data in analysis. The table is not comprehensive and there are certainly other countries whose exports would be larger than some of those shown in the table. Governments' arms export definitions are not consistent from country to country, and not all countries which produce export statistics explain them fully.

In cases where explanations are given they underline the difficulty of using the data in analysis. Some countries aggregate figures for exports of arms and dual-use equipment; others release only an arms export figure; and different countries have different definitions of what is included in the category 'arms'. Some countries release data on the value of items delivered, others on the value of items approved for export. Moreover, the statistics are not necessarily consistent within countries across time. No attempt has been made to compensate for these inconsistencies.

A number of countries report exports of 'Weapons and Ammunition' as one of the categories in the trade statistics supplied to the UN Statistics Division and published by the International Trade Centre of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)/World Trade Organization (WTO). These reports are made in accordance with the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) 891.⁴³ Although these figures are more comparable than those presented in table 8.5, they are only of limited use for analysing the international arms trade. First, reporting is voluntary and some of the major arms exporters, for example, China and Russia, do not report statistics in the 'Weapons and Ammunition' category. Second, the SITC 891 definition of 'Weapons and Ammunition' only includes armoured vehicles, missiles, ordnance, ammunition, firearms and a range of non-military small arms. It does not cover, for example, warships, combat aircraft and military electronics, which make up a considerable part of the international arms trade.

⁴³ These data can be found in the COMTRADE databank, part of which is available on the International Trade Centre Internet website, URL <<http://www.intracen.org/itc/infobase/data/chap33/e891.htm>>. For the exact description of SITC 891 see the UN International Computing Centre Internet website, URL <<gopher://gopher.unicc.org:70/00/itc/dir3/dir31/file313.txt>>.

20 MILITARY SPENDING AND ARMAMENTS, 1997

TWO PAGES FOR OFFICIAL DATA TABLE 8.5

TO BE PP 308 AND 309

Countries which regularly make available information on their overall arms exports remain the exception and not the rule. In the majority of democracies the parliament does not exercise effective oversight of arms exports.

Six countries—Australia, Canada, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA—produce publicly available annual information on arms exports, showing the exact value of arms and military equipment exported to individual countries.⁴⁴ Sweden and the USA have chosen a very open approach, in which detailed information is provided and actively disseminated to the general public. The information is very readily available.⁴⁵ A less open approach, for example, is that of the Belgian and Dutch governments, which only publish aggregate arms export figures and provide confidential country-by-country information to the relevant parliamentary commissions.

The most common form of reports on arms exports, reporting their monetary value, is only useful for assessments of the economic aspects of arms exports. To examine the military consequences of arms exports, such as destabilizing accumulations of weapons, more information on the number and type of equipment items being exported is needed. Ideally, a complete list of export licences and actual deliveries should be provided, stating the recipient, the weaponry in question and the value. Only if this information is easily available is it possible for a parliament to hold the government accountable for its export policy and to have a well-informed and meaningful national debate on arms transfers. As British Foreign Secretary Cook stated: ‘An informed public debate is the best guarantee of responsible regulation of the arms trade’.⁴⁶

A major step towards greater openness is the report published in September 1997 by the US Departments of State and Defense on US arms exports. It provides information on arms exports in 1996, including details of the types of equipment (in some cases the actual designation), the number of items transferred and their value.⁴⁷

The argument often given by governments for not disclosing more details or for not disclosing anything at all on arms exports is the need for commercial confidentiality. Transparency could hurt the interests of arms-producing companies by giving competitors useful information, and certain customers only want to buy if deals are kept secret. Protection of the arms industry seems to override the principle of transparency, which is the basis of the UN Register of Conventional Arms, for example.

In several European countries parliamentarians and NGOs have actively pressured governments to change this position and to release more informa-

⁴⁴ Canada’s report omits sales to its largest customer, the USA, however, for which export licences are not required.

⁴⁵ The Swedish Government publishes an annual report on arms exports on the Internet. Swedish Government Report to Parliament 1996/97:138, Swedish arms exports in 1996, URL <http://www.sb.gov.se/info_rosenbad/departement/utrikes/vapenexport>, version current on 9 Mar. 1998.

⁴⁶ *FCO Daily Bulletin* (note 17).

⁴⁷ US Department of State, US Department of Defense, Foreign Military Assistance Act Report to Congress, Authorized U.S. Commercial Exports, Military Assistance and Foreign Military Sales and Military Imports, Fiscal Year 1996, Washington, DC, Sep. 1997.

tion on arms exports. In presenting new criteria for arms exports in July 1997, the British Labour Government announced that it would publish annual reports on their application.⁴⁸ In 1997 the Norwegian Government published for the first time a comprehensive report on arms transfers in 1996 along the same lines as the Swedish report. The Spanish Parliament passed a motion in March 1997 in which the government was urged to make public essential data on arms exports, and the first such report was published in February 1998.⁴⁹ The Netherlands Government started a study into the possible effects of declassifying the disaggregated arms export data provided to parliament after the latter had urged greater transparency.⁵⁰

The UN Register of Conventional Arms⁵¹

On 28 August 1997 the UN Secretary-General released the fifth annual report of information received from governments on their arms imports and/or exports.⁵² By that time, 84 countries had responded in some way to the request for information.⁵³ As of 1 April 1998, the number had increased to 93 countries.⁵⁴ The geographical pattern of participation in 1997 was very similar to that recorded in previous years, participation being high among the OSCE participating states and countries in the Americas and in Asia, and extremely low in the Middle East and Africa. By the time the Secretary-General's report was released, Israel was the only Middle Eastern country that had responded. Iran, which had submitted data for each of the four previous years after the release of the report, did so on 10 October. However, on behalf of the League of Arab States, Mauritania sent in a *note verbale* which, while 'fully supporting the cause of transparency in armaments', accused the UNROCA of being discriminatory as long as it does not include data on 'advanced conventional weapons, on weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and on high technology with military applications'. It claimed that in its present form the UNROCA favours Israel in the Middle East.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ *FCO Daily Bulletin* (note 17).

⁴⁹ Estévez, A., 'Killing secrets: the story of a success', *Network*, summer 1997; see also table 8.4.

⁵⁰ 'Nederlandse wapenexporten worden mogelijk openbaar' [Dutch arms exports may become public], *De Volkskrant*, 11 Dec. 1997; and Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the state secretaries of Economy and of Defence to the Chairman of the Second Chamber, 22054 nr. 30, The Hague, 27 Feb. 1998.

⁵¹ SIPRI research on the UN register in 1997 was generously supported by a grant from the United States Institute for Peace, Washington, DC.

⁵² United Nations, United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Report of the Secretary-General, United Nations document A/52/312, 28 Aug. 1997.

⁵³ Only 23 countries, some of them reporting nil exports or imports, or providing only background information or *notes verbales*, had reported before the 'deadline' of 30 Apr. 1997.

⁵⁴ This does not include all Arab League countries, for whom Mauritania as Chairman of the Arab Group sent in a *note verbale*. Reply by Mauritania dated 2 Sep. 1997, as included in United Nations document A/52/312, 28 Aug. 1997, pp. 71–72. By comparison, by the same time in 1993 the UN had received 82 replies from members; in 1994, 84 replies; in 1995, 87; and in 1996, 92 replies. However, some countries have routinely submitted information retrospectively for calendar years other than that requested by the Secretary-General.

⁵⁵ Reply by Mauritania dated 2 Sep. 1997, as included in United Nations document A/52/312, 28 Aug. 1997, pp. 71–72.

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Table 8.6. Government returns to the UN Register for calendar years 1992–96, as of 1 April 1998

e = export data, en = nil report on exports, i = import data, in = nil report on imports, b = background information, nv = explanation in *note verbale*, – = no reports received

Country	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Afghanistan	–	nv	–	–	–
Albania	en, in	–	–	en	–
Antigua & Barbuda	en, in	en, in	–	–	–
Andorra	–	–	in	en, in, nv	en, in
Argentina	e, in	en, i, b	en, i, b	e, i, b	en, i, b
Armenia	–	en, in	en, in, b	en, in, b	en, in, b
Australia	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i	e, i, b
Austria	b	en, in, b	en, i, nv, b	en, i, b	e, in, b
Azerbaijan	–	–	–	en, in, b	en, in, b
Bahamas	–	–	en, in	en, in	–
Barbados	–	–	en, in	en, in	–
Belarus	e, in	e, in, b	e	i, b	e, in
Belgium	en, i, b	i, b	e, in, b	e, in, b	e, in, b
Belize	–	–	en, in	–	en, in
Benin	–	–	en, in	–	–
Bhutan	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Bolivia	i, b	–	–	–	–
Brazil	e, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b
Brunei	–	–	–	–	i
Bulgaria	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, b	en, in, b	en, i, b
Burkina Faso	–	en, in	en, in	en, in	–
Cameroon	–	–	en, in	–	en, in
Canada	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, i, b
Central African Rep.	–	–	–	in	–
Chad	–	e	en, in	–	–
Chile	en, i, b	en, in, b	en, i	en, i	en, i
China	e, i	e, in	e, i	e, i	e, i, b, nv
Colombia	en, i	–	–	–	–
Comoros	–	en, in, b	–	–	–
Cook Islands	–	–	–	–	in
Côte d'Ivoire	–	en, in, b	–	–	–
Croatia	en, in, nv	en, in, nv	en, in, nv	–	en, in
Cuba	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Cyprus	–	en, in	en, i	en, i	en, i
Czech Republic	e, in, b	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, in, b	e, in, b
Denmark	en, i, b	e, in, b	en, i, b	en, in, b	en, i, b
Dominica	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in	–
Dominican Republic	–	en, in	–	–	b
Ecuador	–	–	en, in	–	en, in
Egypt	en, in, nv	–	–	–	–
El Salvador	–	–	–	b	–
Estonia	–	–	en, i	en, in	en, in
Ethiopia	–	–	–	en, in, nv	en
Fiji	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Finland	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i	e, i, b	e, i
France	e, in, b	e, in, b	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, i, b

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Country	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Gabon	–	–	–	en, in	–
Georgia	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	–	en, in
Germany	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, in, b
Greece	e, i, nv, b	i, b	i, b	i, b	e, i, b
Grenada	in	en, in	en, in	–	en, in
Guatemala	–	–	–	–	en, in
Guyana	–	–	en, in	–	en, in
Honduras	–	–	–	–	en, in
Hungary	en, in, b	en, i, b	i	en, i	en, i
Iceland	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
India	e, i	e, in	en, i	i	en, i
Indonesia	in	i	i	i	i
Iran	en, i	en, i, nv	en, i	en, i	en, i
Ireland	en, in	en, in	en, i	en, in, b	en, in, b
Israel	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i	e, i	e, i, b
Italy	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i, b
Jamaica	nv	nv	en, in, b, nv	en, in	–
Japan	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b
Jordan	–	en, in	–	en, in	–
Kazakhstan	en, in, nv	–	en, in	e, i	e, in
Korea, South	en, i, b	e, i, b	e, i, b	en, i, b	en, i
Kyrgyzstan	–	–	–	en, in, nv	–
Latvia	–	–	–	en, i	en, in
Lebanon	en, in, nv	–	–	–	–
Lesotho	en, in, nv	–	–	–	–
Libya	en, in, nv	–	en, in, nv	–	–
Liechtenstein	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Lithuania	i	–	–	en, i	en, in
Luxembourg	en, in	en, in	en	en, in	en, in, b
Macedonia	–	–	–	–	en, in, b
Madagascar	–	en, in	–	en, in	en, in
Malawi	–	en, in	–	–	–
Malaysia	en, in	en, i	en, i	i	en, i
Maldives	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Malta	en, i	en, in	en, in, b	en, in	en, in
Marshall Islands	–	en, in	en, in, b	–	en, in
Mauritania	nv	en, in	en, in	–	–
Mauritius	en, nv	en, in	–	en, in	en, in
Mexico	nv	en, in, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b
Moldova	–	–	e, i	en, i	–
Monaco	–	–	–	en, in	en, in
Mongolia	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Namibia	en, in	–	–	en, in	en, in
Nepal	i	en, in	en, in	en, in, nv	–
Netherlands	e, i, b, nv	e, i, b, nv	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, in, b
New Zealand	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, in, b	en, in, b
Nicaragua ^a	e, nv, b	e, b, nv	–	–	–
Niger	nv	en, in, b	en, in, nv	–	–
Norway	en, i, b	en, i	en, in	en, i	en, i
Oman	nv	–	–	–	–

26 MILITARY SPENDING AND ARMAMENTS, 1997

Country	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Pakistan	en, i	en, i	en, i	i	i
Panama	nv, b	–	en, in	–	–
Papua New Guinea	en, in	–	en, in, nv	en, in, nv	–
Paraguay	nv	b	b	–	en, in
Peru	i	en, i	en, i	en, i	en, i
Philippines	en, i, nv	i	i	en, i	en, i
Poland	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, in, b	e, i, b	en, i, b
Portugal	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b
Qatar	b	–	–	–	–
Romania	e, i	e, in	e, i	e, in	e, i
Russia	e, in	e, in	e, in	e, i	e, in
Saint Kitts & Nevis	–	–	–	en, in	–
Saint Lucia	en, in	en, in	en, in	–	en, in
Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	–	en, in	–	en, in	–
Samoa	–	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Senegal	en, in, b	–	–	–	–
Seychelles	en, in,	–	–	–	en, in
Sierra Leone	–	b	–	–	–
Singapore	en, i	en, i	en, i	en, i	e, i
Slovakia	e, in, nv	e, i, nv	e, i	e, i	e, i, b
Slovenia	en, in, nv	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, i
Solomon Islands	en, in, nv	–	en, in	–	–
South Africa	nv	–	e, in, b	e, in, b	e, in
Spain	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b
Sri Lanka	i, nv	i	i	i	–
Sweden	e, i, b	e, i, b	en, i, b	en, i, b	e, i, b
Switzerland	en, in, b	e, in, b	en, in, b	e, in, b	e, i, b
Tajikistan	–	–	en, in	en, in	–
Tanzania	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in	en, in
Thailand	–	i	en, i	i	i
Trinidad and Tobago	–	en, in	–	en, in	en, in
Tunisia	nv	–	–	–	–
Turkey	en, i, b	en, i	en, i	en, i, b	en, in, b
Turkmenistan	–	–	–	en, in	e
Ukraine	en, in	e, in	e, in	e, in	e
UK	e, i, b	e, in, b	e, i, b	e, i, b	e, i, b
USA	e, i, b, nv	e, i, b, nv	e, i, b, nv	e, i, b, nv	e, i, b
Vanuatu	en, in	en, in	–	en, in	–
Viet Nam	–	–	in	en, i	en, in
Yugoslavia (S & M.)	en, in, b, nv	en, in, b	en, in, b	–	–
Total reports	92	90	94	95	93
On exports (en)	22 (51)	24 (55)	22 (64)	21 (65)	26 (61)
On imports (in)	38 (41)	31 (53)	42 (48)	42 (51)	37 (50)
Background data	34	37	31	31	33
Notes verbales	32	8	7	6	1

^a While submitting a comprehensive aggregate report for 1992/93, Nicaragua did not submit data for exports in the standard format.

Note: Non-UN members Switzerland and the Holy See (Vatican) were asked to provide data. The Republic of China (Taiwan), also a non-member, was not asked for information.

Four countries, Brunei, Guatemala, Honduras and Macedonia, submitted returns to the register for the first time in 1997, for calendar year 1996. On the other hand 21 countries which had submitted returns to the register in 1996 did not do so in 1997. As noted above for Iran, some of these countries are likely to supply information at a later date.

While the number of states reporting to the register has not changed, there is a greater willingness to go beyond the minimum reporting requirements. Several states, including China and the UK, have provided more details in their 1996 report than in earlier reports. Information on the exact designation of the weapons would be especially useful to enable the possible impact of arms transfers on stability to be assessed. The main exporters of weapons in the seven UNROCA categories, Russia and the USA, have not yet provided such qualitative details. The USA did, however, publish a very comprehensive public report on its 1996 arms exports, which included many of the details that would make the US report to the UNROCA really useful.⁵⁶

There are still widespread discrepancies between the information submitted by exporting and importing states for their bilateral transfers in the same year. In some cases exporters report as much as 500 per cent higher or lower deliveries than the importers. These discrepancies make the data in the register difficult to interpret.⁵⁷ There are also cases in which exports and/or imports have been clearly overlooked by the reporting countries, or in which major transfers have taken place without the knowledge of those government departments responsible for policy on this matter. Examples of cases in which reports were not made to the UNROCA, but for which ample and official sources document the transfers, are the delivery of three F-16 FGA aircraft by the USA to Denmark in 1994, which neither country reported, and, more serious from the viewpoint of 'destabilizing arms build-ups', the transfer of 84 T-72 tanks, 50 BMP-2 infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), 90 pieces of artillery and 24 SS-1 Scud-B surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs) from Russia to Armenia in 1993–96.⁵⁸ On the Russian side it is clear that the central authorities responsible for arms exports were not informed by the local military authorities that effected the transfers, but the Armenian 'nil' reports for 1993 to 1996 are more difficult to explain, unless the Armenian authorities responsible for importing the equipment have also kept those responsible for the compilation of the report to the UN uninformed.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ See under 'Official data on arms exports' above.

⁵⁷ The problem of discrepancies led some government experts to suggest the creation of a consultative mechanism by which the UN Secretariat could question member states about the contents of their annual returns with a view to harmonizing the information presented by exporters and importers. However, there was no consensus supporting this idea. See also Laurence, E. J., Wezeman, S. T. and Wulf, H., *Arms Watch: SIPRI Report on the First Year of the UN Register of Conventional Arms*, SIPRI Research Report no. 6 (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993).

⁵⁸ Anthony, I., 'Illicit arms transfers', ed. Anthony (note 3), pp. 224–25.

⁵⁹ 'Rokhlin details arms supplies to Armenia', *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), 3 Apr. 1997, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report—Central Eurasia (FBIS-SOV)*, FBIS-SOV-97-067, 3 Apr. 1997. See also chapter 12 in this volume.

The 1997 Review

In early and mid-1997 the Group of Governmental Experts met to review the operation of the UNROCA and to consider improvements and additions to the reporting procedures. The group completed its work on 15 August 1997, presenting a consensus report on 29 August 1997.⁶⁰ Despite the fact that panel members stressed their intention to be productive, the results, as in 1994, were disappointing. The group discussed expanding the UNROCA to include procurement from national production, and additional types of conventional weapon. Once again, however, the issue of the inclusion of weapons of mass destruction blocked all substantial progress. The group was unable to reach agreement on any measure to expand or strengthen the UNROCA, referring the issue once more to the next review, which was recommended for 2000. The only positive decision was to make public the background information provided by several states instead of only providing an index of such information as had been done previously. However, most if not all background information is already publicly available and the decision is, therefore, only of minor importance.

The aim of the UNROCA was to contribute to the prevention of destabilizing accumulations of conventional weapons by giving early warning through transparency. Despite the fact that some of the information reported gave unique insights into patterns of arms transfers not revealed in other public sources, five years of experience with the UNROCA has shown no evidence of preventing destabilizing weapon accumulations and in many cases has led to confusion where importer and exporter reports differ widely. The fact that procurement from national production is still not part of the UNROCA is a further hindrance in analysing arms transfers and their military-political impact.

The disappointing performance of both reviews, the continuous low quality of some of the reported data and the lack of reports from certain key countries and regions does not inspire strong confidence in any future review.

The idea of setting up regional registers tailored specifically to the wishes and needs of regions, included as an option for future development in the original UN resolution for the UNROCA, has been discussed in several regions and forums—in Africa, the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the EU and Latin America—but it has so far met with only lukewarm receptions. Generally there has been scepticism about the usefulness of reproducing the UNROCA on a regional level unless agreement can be reached on which additional weapon systems of specific importance for regional stability should be covered. There is no mandate from an existing institution such as ASEAN or any other regional institution with which reports could be deposited. An additional problem is that in some cases it would be difficult to define the region. Clearly the Americas are at least militarily independent of the rest of the world and could, therefore, have their own

⁶⁰United Nations, Report on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development, UN document A/52/316, 29 Aug. 1997.

regional register with their own organization—the Organization of American States. However, regions such as the Middle East or South-East Asia are more difficult to define. While ASEAN may set up a regional register this would not contribute much to arms transparency or stability in the region, since the main concern for the ASEAN countries is China.