V. Transparency in arms transfers

PAUL HOLTOM AND MARK BROMLEY

Official and publicly accessible data on arms transfers is important for assessing states' arms export and arms procurement policies. However, publishing data on arms sales and acquisitions is a sensitive issue for nearly all states. This section analyses recent developments in official international, regional and national reporting mechanisms that aim, in whole or in part, to increase the quality and quantity of publicly available information on international arms transfers. This includes the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) as well as national and regional reports on arms exports.[1]

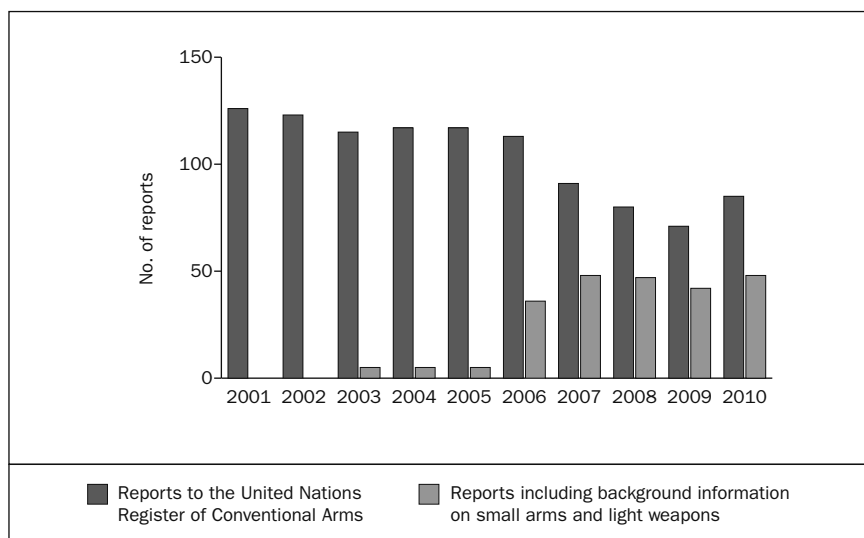### The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

UNROCA, which was established in 1991, is the key international mechanism for official transparency on arms transfers. Each year all UN member states are requested to report information to UNROCA on the export and import of seven categories of conventional weapons in the previous calendar year.[2] States are also invited to provide information on their international transfers of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their holdings and procurement from domestic production of major conventional weapons.

The level of reporting in 2011 increased from an all-time low in 2010 (see figure 6.4). As of December 2011, 85 states had submitted reports on their arms transfers during 2010 (including 35 nil reports, i.e. reports indicating no imports or exports of major conventional weapons). There was a notable increase in reporting by states in the Americas, with a number of states reporting in 2011 for the first time in several years (see table 6.8). For example, the Dominican Republic reported for the first time since 2002, Uruguay for the first time since 2003, Ecuador and Guyana for the first time since 2006, and Trinidad and Tobago for the first time since 2007.[3]

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[1] This section does not address confidential intergovernmental exchanges of information on arms transfers, such as those that occur within the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Organization of American States and the Wassenaar Arrangement. Another source of information on the international arms trade is the customs data of the UN Commodity Trade Statistics Database (Comtrade). Comtrade data is not discussed here because it is neither intended nor designed to be a tool for increasing the amount of publicly available information on international arms transfers. Comtrade data is included in the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (NISAT) Small Arms Trade Database, <http://www.prio.no/NISAT/Small-Arms-Trade-Database/>.

[2] These categories are battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, large-calibre artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships and missiles or missile launchers.

[3] See also Bromley, M. and Solmirano, C., *Transparency in Military Spending and Arms Acquisitions in Latin America and the Caribbean*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 31 (SIPRI: Stockholm, Jan. 2012).

Figure 6.4. Reports submitted to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, 2001–10

Years refer to the year covered by the report, not the year of its submission.

Source: UNROCA database, <http://www.un-register.org/>.

Table 6.8. Reports submitted to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, by region, 2006–10

Years refer to the year covered by the report, not the year of its submission. Figures in brackets are numbers of nil reports.

Region	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Africa	15 (12)	8 (7)	4 (3)	4 (3)	1 (0)
Americas	22 (16)	13 (6)	15 (9)	10 (2)	19 (10)
Asia and Oceania	27 (18)	21 (12)	19 (7)	17 (9)	19 (11)
Europe	47 (15)	46 (13)	40 (10)	39 (15)	44 (13)
Middle East	2 (1)	3 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)	2 (1)
Total	**113 (62)**	**91 (39)**	**80 (30)**	**72 (30)**	**85 (35)**

Source: UNROCA database, <http://www.un-register.org/>.

South Africa was the only African state to report to UNROCA during 2011. The Republic of the Congo, in its submission to the UN Secretary-General on conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels, highlighted several factors that limited African participation in UNROCA, including the omission of light weapons from the scope of UNROCA's seven categories, the 'excessive use of the designation of "classi-fied information"' by African states, and the need for 'international aid to contribute to disarmament in Africa through the establishment of related

cooperation mechanisms'.[4] Considering the increase in participation by states in the Americas and the various arms control arrangements in that region, it is noteworthy that the Republic of the Congo referred to the experience of the Americas as a positive example for African states interested in pursuing conventional arms control.[5]

Of the 85 states that provided information to UNROCA in 2011, 49 provided background information on international transfers of SALW, including 8 nil reports. Austria, Grenada, Guyana, Iceland and Mongolia provided background information on international transfers of SALW for the first time. So far, nine states have submitted views on the inclusion of SALW in UNROCA since being invited to do so by the UN General Assembly at the end of 2009. In 2011 Burkina Faso and the Netherlands expressed their support for the expansion of UNROCA to include SALW.[6]

During 2011 information was only made available on 64 of the 85 states that had reported to UNROCA on transfers carried out in 2010.[7] The delay in publishing an addendum report containing information on the 21 states that reported after mid-July may have been linked to the unveiling in October 2011 of a new map interface for the publicly accessible online UNROCA database by the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).[8] Although the aim of the new database was to increase transparency, at the time of its launch it had a number of flaws. For example, it does not provide a comprehensive overview of all submissions, as was previously the case; it was launched before all of the information provided by UN member states during 2011 had been entered and, as of December 2011, it remained incomplete; and, moreover, its introduction seems to have delayed the public release of these states' reports. It is hoped that some of these problems will be addressed during 2012. The UNODA intends to use the new interface to enable states to report electronically, with a trial planned for 2012.

In December the UN General Assembly confirmed that a group of governmental experts (GGE) will be convened in 2012 to review the con-

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[4] United Nations, General Assembly, 'Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels', Report of the Secretary-General, A/66/154, 15 July 2011, pp. 5–6.

[5] On transparency in Latin America see Bromley and Solmirano (note 3).

[6] United Nations, General Assembly, 'United Nations Register of Conventional Arms', Report of the Secretary-General, A/66/127, 12 July 2011. Burkina Faso did not report to UNROCA during 2011 Its support for an 8th, SALW category is contained in United Nations, General Assembly, 'The arms trade treaty', Report of the Secretary-General, 13 Dec. 2011, p. 3. On reporting on SALW to UNROCA see Holtom, P., *Transparency in Transfers of Small Arms and Light Weapons: Reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, 2003–2006*, SIPRI Policy Paper no. 22 (SIPRI: Stockholm, July 2008); and Holton, P., 'Reporting transfers of small arms and light weapons to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, 2007', SIPRI Background Paper, Feb. 2009, <http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=373>.

[7] United Nations, General Assembly, 'United Nations Register of Conventional Arms', Report of the Secretary-General, A/66/127, 12 July 2011.

[8] UNROCA database, <http://www.un-register.org/>.

tinuing operation and further development of UNROCA.[9] However, in contrast to previous GGEs, whose sessions took place during a single calendar year, the new GGE will convene in November 2012 and during the first half of 2013. The GGE's report will be presented at the UN General Assembly's 68th session, in 2013. The decision to begin the GGE in late 2012 was taken primarily to accommodate the UN conference on an arms trade treaty (ATT), which will take place in July 2012, since the scope of and ways of reporting under an ATT are often discussed in connection with UNROCA.[10]

National and regional reports on arms exports

Since the early 1990s an increasing number of governments have published national reports on arms exports.[11] As of January 2012, 35 states had published at least one national report on arms exports since 1990, including 32 that had done so since 2009.[12] Of the 32 states, 27 included information in their reports on arms export licences granted and 23 included information on actual arms exports (see table 6.9).

One state, Poland, published its first two national reports on arms exports during 2011, providing information on arms exports in 2008–2009 and in 2010.[13] The reports contained information on the number and value of arms export licences issued and the European Union (EU) Common Military List category of the goods involved, broken down by destination. Canada produced its first national report on arms exports since 2009, providing data on exports in 2007, 2008 and 2009.[14] The report provided the financial value of goods exported broken down by destination and control list category. As in previous editions, the Canadian report did not include information on transfers to the USA, which—the report states—accounted for more than half of Canada's exports of military goods and technology.[15] Ireland published its first national report on arms exports for over 10 years,

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[9] UN General Assembly Resolution 66/39, 2 Dec. 2011.

[10] See chapter 10, section II, in this volume.

[11] A database of the published reports is maintained by SIPRI at <http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/transfers/transparency/national_reports>. See also Weber, H. and Bromley, M., 'National reports on arms exports', SIPRI Fact Sheet, Mar. 2011, <http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=423>.

[12] The 3 states that have produced a report since 1990 but not since 2009 are Australia, Belarus and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

[13] Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), *Exports of Arms and Military Equipment from Poland: Report for the Years 2008–2009* (MFA: Warsaw, 2010); and Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Exports of Arms and Military Equipment from Poland: Report for 2010* (MFA: Warsaw, 2011).

[14] Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Trade Controls and Technical Barriers Bureau, Export Controls Division, *Report on Exports of Military Goods from Canada 2007–2009* (DFAIT: Ottawa, 2011). Canada's previous national report, published in 2009, covered exports during 2006.

[15] Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (note 14), pp. 5, 7.

providing information on arms exports during 2008, 2009 and 2010.[16] The report contained information on the number and value of arms export licences issued and the EU Common Military List category of the goods, broken down by destination.

Trends in the level of detail that states include in their national reports on arms exports are mixed. In 2011 Albania published its third annual report on arms exports, detailing transfers in 2010.[17] The report provided information that was not present in previous editions, including descriptions of the goods transferred and their number or weight. Croatia published its second annual report on arms exports, detailing transfers in 2010.[18] Again, the report provided information that was not present in the first edition, including details of actual exports—the first edition only covered export licences granted—and either the number or weight of the goods transferred. In contrast, the latest edition of the '655 Report' published by the United States Department of State, which provides information on goods licensed for export and exported under the Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) programme, contained less detail than in previous years.[19] While the report was published 6 months earlier than previous editions, information was disaggregated by US Military List category as opposed to US Military List subcategory, as was the case in previous editions.[20]

The EU Common Position defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment requires EU member states to exchange data on the financial values of their export licence approvals and actual exports along with information on their denials of arms export licences.[21] The Council of the EU compiles and publishes this data in an annual report. The 13th annual report, published in December 2011, covers transfers during 2010. Seventeen of the 27 EU member states provided full submissions to both the 12th and 13th annual reports—that is, they provided data on the financial value of both arms export licences and actual arms exports, broken down by both destination and EU Military List

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[16] Irish Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation (DJE), *Annual Report under the Control of Exports Act 2008 Covering the Period 2008–2010* (DJE: Dublin, 2011). Prior to this report, the most recent data available covered licences granted during Jan. 1998.

[17] Albanian State Export Control Authority, *Annual Report on Export Control for 2010* (Ministry of Defence: Tirana, 2011).

[18] Croatian Ministry of Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship (MELE), *Annual Report on Export and Import of Military Goods and Non-Military Lethal Goods for 2010* (MELE: Zagreb, [2011]).

[19] US Department of State, 'Direct Commercial Sales authorizations for fiscal year 2010', Report pursuant to Section 655 of the Foreign Assistance Act, [n.d.], <http://www.pmddtc.state.gov/reports/655_intro.html>.

[20] See also Bromley, M., 'The financial value of states' arms exports, 2000–2009', *SIPRI Yearbook 2011*, pp. 306–307.

[21] Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 Dec. 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, *Official Journal of the European Union*, L335, 13 Dec. 2008

category—down from 19 states for the 11th annual report.[22] Several states—including France, Germany and the UK, the EU's three largest arms exporters—continue to have difficulties collecting and submitting data on actual arms exports disaggregated by EU Common Military List category.[23] Poland—another state that does not submit data on actual exports—noted that one way to generate data on actual arms exports would be to require companies to report on the use of the export licences that they have been issued.[24]

[22] Council of the European Union, Thirteenth Annual Report according to Article 8(2) of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, *Official Journal of the European Union*, C382, 30 Dec. 2011; Council of the European Union, Twelfth Annual Report according to Article 8(2) of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, *Official Journal of the European Union*, C9, 13 Jan. 2011; and Council of the European Union, Eleventh Annual Report according to Article 8(2) of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, *Official Journal of the European Union*, C265, 6 Nov. 2010.

[23] Weber and Bromley (note 11).

[24] Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Report for 2010* (note 13), p. 15.

Table 6.9. States participating in international, regional and national reporting mechanisms on arms transfers, 2009–11

An x denotes that the state published or submitted a report at least once in the period 2009–11. In the cases of UNROCA and the OAS, 'nil' indicates a nil report. In the case of the EU, an asterisk, '*', denotes a complete data set (see note *c* below).

| State | UNROCA | | Regional reports | | National reports | |
	Exports or imports	Background information on SALW	EU[a]	OAS[b]	Export licences[c]	Arms exports[d]
Albania	x (nil)	x	–	–	x	–
Andorra	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Antigua and Barbuda	x (nil)	x (nil)	–	–	–	–
Argentina	x	x (nil)	–	–	–	–
Armenia	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Australia	x	x	–	–	–	–
Austria	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Azerbaijan	x	–	–	–	–	–
Bangladesh	x	x	–	–	–	–
Belarus[e]	x	–	–	–	–	–
Belgium	x	x	x	–	x[f]	–
Belize	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Bhutan	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Bolivia	x (nil)	x	–	x (nil)	–	–
Bosnia and Herzegovina	x	x	–	–	x	–
Brazil	x	–	–	x	–	–
Bulgaria	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Burundi	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Cambodia	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Canada	x	x	–	–	–	x
Chile	x	x	–	x	–	–
China	x	–	–	–	–	–
Colombia	x	x	–	–	–	–
Comoros	x (nil)	x (nil)	–	–	–	–
Cook Islands	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Costa Rica	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Croatia	x	x	–	–	x	x
Cyprus	x	x (nil)	x*	–	–	–
Czech Republic	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Denmark	x	x	x	–	x	–
Dominican Republic	x	–	–	–	–	–
Ecuador	x	–	–	x	–	–
El Salvador	x (nil)	x (nil)	–	x (nil)	–	–
Estonia	x	–	x*	–	x	–
Finland	x	–	x*	–	x	x
France	x	x	x	–	x	x
Germany	x	x	x	–	x	x
Greece	x	x	x*	–	–	–
Grenada	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Guatemala	–	–	–	x (nil)	–	–
Guyana	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–

| State | UNROCA | | Regional reports | | National reports | |
	Exports or imports	Background information on SALW	EU[a]	OAS[b]	Export licences[c]	Arms exports[d]
Hungary	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Iceland	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
India	x	–	–	–	–	–
Indonesia	x	x	–	–	–	–
Ireland	x	x	x*	–	x	–
Israel	x	–	–	–	–	–
Italy	x	x	x	–	x	x
Japan	x	x (nil)[g]	–	–	–	–
Kazakhstan	x	x	–	–	–	–
Korea, South	x	x	–	–	–	–
Kyrgyzstan	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Laos	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Latvia	x	x	x*	–	–	–
Lebanon	x (nil)	x (nil)	–	–	–	–
Liechtenstein	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Lithuania	x	x	x*	–	–	–
Luxembourg	–	–	x*	–	–	–
Malaysia	x	–	–	–	–	–
Macedonia, FYR	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Malta	x (nil)	x (nil)	x*	–	–	–
Mauritius	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Mexico	x	x	–	x (nil)	–	–
Moldova	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Monaco	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Mongolia	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Montenegro	x	x	–	–	x	x
Nauru	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Netherlands	x	x	x*	–	x	–
New Zealand	x	x	–	–	–	–
Norway	x	x	–	–	–	x
Pakistan	x	–	–	–	–	–
Palau	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Panama	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Peru	x	x	–	x	–	–
Philippines	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Poland	x	x	x	–	x	–
Portugal	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Romania	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Russia	x	–	–	–	–	–
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Samoa	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
San Marino	x (nil)	x	–	–	–	–
Serbia	x	x	–	–	x	x
Seychelles	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Singapore	x	–	–	–	–	–
Slovakia	x	x	x*	–	x	x

State	UNROCA		Regional reports		National reports	
	Exports or imports	Background information on SALW	EU[a]	OAS[b]	Export licences[c]	Arms exports[d]
Slovenia	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Solomon Islands	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
South Africa	x	–	–	–	–	x
Spain	x	x	x*	–	x	x
Suriname	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Swaziland	x (nil)	x (nil)	–	–	–	–
Sweden	x	x[h]	x	–	x	x
Switzerland	x	x	–	–	–	x
Tajikistan	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Thailand	x	x	–	–	–	–
Trinidad and Tobago	x (nil)	x (nil)	–	–	–	–
Tunisia	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Turkey	x	x	–	–	–	–
Turkmenistan	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Ukraine	x	x	–	–	–	x
United Kingdom	x	x	x	–	x	–
United States	x	–	–	–	x	x
Uruguay	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Viet Nam	x (nil)	–	–	–	–	–
Total: 106 states	**104 (43 nil)**	**68 (10 nil)**	**27 (19*)**	**8 (4 nil)**	**27**	**23**

EU = European Union; OAS = Organization of American States; SALW = small arms and light weapons; UNROCA = United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

[a] The EU Common Position defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment requires EU member states to exchange data on the financial values of their export licence approvals and actual exports along with information on their denials of arms export licences. This data is published in an annual report. A country is marked as providing a complete data set to the EU annual report if it provided data on the financial value of both arms export licences and actual arms exports, broken down by both destination and EU Military List category.

[b] The 1999 Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions (OAS Transparency Convention) was modelled on UNROCA. It requires the governments of states parties to submit annual reports on all imports and exports of the 7 UNROCA categories of major conventional weapons.

[c] A country is marked as providing information on arms export licences in its national report if it identifies the destinations for which arms export licences have been granted.

[d] A country is marked as providing information on arms exports in its national report if it identifies the destinations to which arms have been exported.

[e] In May 2009 Belarus published a report on its export controls and arms exports in 2008, but this report does not provide information on export licences, licence denials, etc.

[f] Since 2003 the 3 regional governments of Belgium (Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia) have been responsible for issuing export licences. Each region produces its own report on arms exports, each of which contains more detail than the Belgian national report.

[g] Japan submitted background information to UNROCA on the procurement of SALW through national production in 2009 and 2010.

[h] Sweden did not submit information on the number of SALW imported and exported in 2009 and 2010, only the categories of weapon systems and the origin or destination.

Sources: UNROCA database, <http://www.un-register.org/>; Council of the European Union, 11th–13th annual reports according to Article 8(2) of Council Common Position 2008/944/ CFSP defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-policy/non-proliferation,-disarma ment-and-export-control-/security-related-export-controls-ii>; Organization of American States, Catalogue of Member States Reports Presented in Compliance with General Assembly Resolutions on Hemispheric Security Issues, <http://www.apps.oas.org/cshdocs/>; and national reports collected at <http://www.sipri.org/research/armaments/transfers/trans parency/national_reports>.