

Appendix 8D. The reporting of military expenditure data

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I. Introduction

The United Nations asserts that ‘a better flow of objective information on military matters can help to relieve international tension and is therefore an important contribution to conflict prevention’ and that transparency in military issues is an essential element for building trust among countries.¹ Obtaining primary and comparable data on official military expenditure is an important task for both SIPRI and the United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA). The systems through which countries can report their military expenditure to the UN and SIPRI are described in section II of this appendix. The levels of reporting to the UN and SIPRI in 2006 are given in section III and the trends for the period 2001–2006 in section IV.

II. The reporting systems

The United Nations reporting system

The UN Secretary-General every year invites all member states (currently 192) through a *note verbale* to report their military expenditure for the most recent financial year. The basis for this request is UN General Assembly Resolution 35/142 B, ‘Reduction of military budgets’, adopted in 1980.² Successive biennial General Assembly resolutions have called for the continued reporting of military expenditure by member states.³

Countries are requested to report, preferably (and to the extent possible) using the reporting instrument developed for this purpose—the UN Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures—or in any other format for reporting military expenditure developed by other international or regional organizations. The instrument is in the form of a matrix with fields for the reporting of disaggregated data by function—aggregate personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, construction, and research and development—and by military service—air force, army, navy and so on—as well as aggregated totals. Since it was believed that some countries found this matrix too complicated, since 2003 the United Nations has provided an alternative, simplified reporting form with a view to encourage reporting by an increased number of countries.⁴ The reported data are included in an annual report by

¹ UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/44, 8 Dec. 2005. UN General Assembly resolutions are available at URL <<http://www.un.org/documents/resga.htm>>.

² UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/35/142 B, 12 Dec. 1980.

³ The most recent such resolution is UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/44 (note 1).

⁴ United Nations, Department for Disarmament Affairs, *Transparency in Armaments: United Nations Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures, Global and Regional Participation 1981–2002* (United Nations: New York, N.Y., 2003), URL <<http://disarmament2.un.org/cab/milex.html>>, p. 3. The UN’s standardized instrument and simplified form are reproduced on pp. 12–14.

Table 8D.1. Reporting of military expenditure data to SIPRI and the United Nations, by region, 2006

Figures are numbers of countries.

Region/ subregion ^a	Reporting to SIPRI		Reporting to the UN		Total SIPRI and UN reports ^d
	Requests	Countries reporting data	Requests	Countries reporting data	
<i>Africa</i>	49 ^e	Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa	4	Burkina Faso, Mauritius, Namibia ^f , Zambia ^f	4
<i>Americas</i>					
North America	2	Canada, USA	2	Canada, USA	2
Central America	7	Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico	5	Mexico, Nicaragua ^f	2
South America	11	Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay	3	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile ^f , Ecuador, Paraguay	6
Caribbean	8	–	0	Jamaica ^f , Suriname ^f , Trinidad and Tobago ^f	3
<i>Asia and Oceania</i>					
Central Asia	5	Kazakhstan	1	Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan ^f	3
East Asia	16	Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand	4	Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea ^f , Mongolia, Thailand ^f	6
South Asia	6	–	0	Bangladesh, Nepal	2
Oceania	4	Australia	1	New Zealand	1
<i>Europe</i>					
West Europe	21	Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey	18	Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland ^f , Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK	18
Central Europe	16	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina,	15	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina,	14

Eastern Europe	7	Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine	5	7	Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, FYROM, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	(0)	5	6
<i>Middle East</i>	14	Jordan, Lebanon	2	14	Israel ^f , Lebanon ^f	(0)	2	3
<i>Small states</i> ^g	0	–	0	24	San Marino ^f	(10)	11	1
Total	166		60	192		(11)	79	85

FYROM = Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

^a In order to make the SIPRI and UN reporting systems comparable, countries are grouped according to the geographical regions in the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database. See appendix 8A in this volume.

^b 11 UN member states submitted nil reports: Andorra, Costa Rica, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Nauru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. In addition, 2 non-UN members submitted nil reports: Cook Islands and Holy See.

^c The total number of UN reports includes countries reporting data and those submitting nil reports.

^d This column shows the total number of countries that submitted reports with military expenditure data to either SIPRI or the UN (excluding the nil reports). Totals may be smaller than the sums of reports to the UN and SIPRI because the same country may report to both organizations.

^e There are 50 African countries in the SIPRI database, but SIPRI is unable to send requests to Rwanda because of a lack of contact details.

^f These 15 countries reported their data using a simplified UN form.

^g These are very small UN member states with no or only minimal defence forces.

Sources: Submitted filled-in SIPRI questionnaires; and United Nations, 'Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures', Report of the UN Secretary-General, UN document A/61/133, 26 July 2006; A/61/133/Add. 1, 6 Oct. 2006; and A/61/133/Add. 2, 4 Jan. 2007, URL <<http://disarmament2.un.org/cab/milex.htm>>.

Table 8D.2. Number of countries reporting their military expenditure to SIPRI and the United Nations, 2001–2006

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<i>UN reporting system^a</i>						
Standardized reports (incl. nil reports)	61	81	65	64	67	64
Nil reports ^b	5	11	11	10	12	11
Simplified reports	10	14	7	15
Total reporting (incl. nil reports)	61	81	75	78	74	79
Total number of UN requests	189	191	191	191	191	192
<i>SIPRI reporting system</i>						
Reports ^c	63	61	64	62	67	60
Total number of SIPRI requests	158	158	158	159	167	166

^a The figures for 2001–2003 and 2005 include some late submissions of data to the UN and are therefore slightly higher than those presented in previous editions of the SIPRI Yearbook. The data for 2006 include late submissions up to 31 Jan. 2007, but some countries may yet report. All figures exclude non-UN member states that submitted reports.

^b These figures exclude nil reports by non-UN members.

^c A revised counting system means that the figures for responses to SIPRI in 2001 and 2002 are higher than those published in previous editions of the SIPRI Yearbook.

Sources: Submitted filled-in SIPRI questionnaires; and United Nations, ‘Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures’, Reports of the Secretary-General, various dates, 2001–2007, URL <<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/milex.html>>.

the UN Secretary-General to the General Assembly and are published in appropriate UN media.⁵

The SIPRI reporting system

SIPRI has been sending requests for data on military expenditure to governments on a regular basis since 1993. Such requests are sent to all countries that are included in the SIPRI Military Expenditure Database (currently 167 countries).⁶ Every year SIPRI sends questionnaires to various national government offices and embassies of the respective countries. The SIPRI questionnaire is a simplified version of the UN instrument, with fields for data on spending on military and civilian personnel, operations and maintenance, procurement, military construction, military research and development, and paramilitary forces. Data are requested for the five most recent years in order to ensure consistency over time. The reported data are one of the sources of information used in preparing SIPRI’s tables of military expenditure,

⁵ United Nations, Department for Disarmament Affairs, *Transparency in Armaments: United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures—Guidelines* (United Nations: New York, N.Y., [n.d.]), p. 1; and UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/44 (note 1).

⁶ There is 1 exception: SIPRI is unable to send requests to Rwanda because of a lack of contact details.

which are published in the SIPRI Yearbook, are available in the online SIPRI Military Expenditure Database and on request from SIPRI.⁷

III. Reporting of military expenditure data in 2006

In 2006 a total of 85 countries reported data on military spending to either the UN or SIPRI (see table 8D.1). Including 'nil reports' to the UN, the total number of countries reporting data was 96.⁸

In 2006 the number of reports received by SIPRI was 60. This was a decrease from the 67 countries that reported in 2005 and represents a response rate of 36 per cent in 2006 against 39 per cent in 2005.

The number of countries reporting data to the UN increased to 68 in 2006 from 62 in 2005. These data reports represent a response rate of 35 per cent of the member states in 2006, up from 32 per cent in 2005. Including nil reports, the total number of reports to the UN increased from 74 in 2005 to 79 in 2006.

On a regional basis, the best response in 2006 was from Europe and the Americas, where most countries submitted reports to both SIPRI and the UN. In Western Europe 20 out of 21 countries reported to either SIPRI or the UN (excluding the nil report from Iceland). In Central Europe all of the 16 countries covered by SIPRI and the UN reported data, including newly independent Montenegro. Of the seven Eastern European states (the European members of the Commonwealth of Independent States), six reported to either SIPRI or the UN. Both North American countries, six of the seven Central American countries and eight of the 11 South American countries reported data to either SIPRI or the UN. No Caribbean country responded to SIPRI, but three reported to the UN.

In Africa and the Middle East the response rate was very low in 2006, as it has been in previous years. In Africa six of a total of 50 states submitted data to SIPRI or the UN, while in the Middle East three out of 14 states did. Furthermore, only two of the six South Asian countries reported to the UN and none to SIPRI. In contrast, reporting by Central Asian countries improved in 2006—three of the six countries reported, compared to only one in 2005.

IV. Trends in reporting of military expenditure, 2001–2006

In spite of the DDA's efforts to enhance participation in the UN Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures, there has been no significant increase in participation in recent years (see table 8D.2). In fact, the number of countries reporting to the UN in 2006 (79 countries) is lower than in 2002 (81). Thus, it appears that the simplified report introduced in 2002 has not delivered the intended result of an increased level of reporting. Instead, countries that previously reported with the standardized instrument have changed to the simplified form.⁹

⁷ See appendix 8A. The SIPRI Military Expenditure Database is available at URL <http://www.sipri.org/contents/milap/milex/mex_database1.html>.

⁸ A nil report is a questionnaire returned to the UN with no data entered, submitted by a country with no or very small defence forces.

⁹ E.g. in 2005 Thailand reported using the standardized instrument and in 2006 it used the simplified form.

The regions with low reporting rates—Africa and the Middle East—have maintained low reporting rates over time.¹⁰ Furthermore, countries in these low-reporting regions consistently fail to report data, rather than reporting intermittently as in other regions.¹¹ However, the total number of countries participating in the UN reporting system at least once during the period 2001–2006 has increased.

The total number of requests sent by SIPRI has increased from 158 requests in 2001 to 166 in 2006. However, the number of countries reporting to SIPRI has varied little over the period: in 2001 the number was 63 compared to 60 in 2006. As a consequence, the rate of response to SIPRI has decreased over this period, from 40 per cent to 36 per cent.

¹⁰ United Nations (note 4), pp. 8–11.

¹¹ United Nations (note 4), p. 3.