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General and complete disarmament: transparency in armaments

Continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development

Note by the Secretary-General

1. In its resolution [74/53](#), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts, with the broadest possible participation and on the basis of equitable geographical representation, to prepare a report on the continuing operation and relevance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, including by exploring the relationship between the participation in, scope of and use of the Register, and its further development, taking into account the work of the Conference on Disarmament, relevant deliberations within the United Nations, the views expressed by Member States and the reports of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development, with a view to taking a decision at its seventy-seventh session.
2. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly a report prepared with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development.

* [A/77/50](#).



Report on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development

Summary

Every three years, the Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms reviews the operation and relevance of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and its further development. The 2022 Group concluded its work on 17 June 2022, following three one-week sessions held in New York and Geneva.

The major recommendations of the 2022 Group of Governmental Experts include a new description and heading for category V to read “Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles”, a description for small arms and light weapons for reporting under the “seven-plus-one formula”, reference reporting forms for information on procurement through national production and military holdings and updated simplified “nil” reporting forms. The Group recommended a series of practical measures for the secretariat and Member States to promote participation and use of the Register, including the establishment of an “informal group of friends” and a unique social media identity for the Register. The report of the Group also provides recommendations for consideration by the next Group of Governmental Experts.

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Foreword by the Secretary-General

In accordance with the practice of undertaking triennial reviews of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene a Group of Governmental Experts in 2022 to report on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register and its further development.

For 30 years, the Register has served as a global instrument for promoting transparency in international arms transfers. Towards this end, the Register helps to build trust among States and enhance international stability and security, which, in turn, are the conditions necessary for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. The current worrying trends in the global arms trade, which reflect growing tensions within the international security environment, underscore the continued importance of the Register and the need to adapt it to emerging technological developments.

Twenty Member States responded to my invitation to nominate experts to participate in the work of the Group. Through their diligent work and shared commitment, those experts produced the present consensus report, which I am pleased to transmit to the General Assembly.

The Group reflected on the advancement in technologies and ensured that the seven categories of the Register continue to capture all relevant conventional weapons. Considering the emergence and rapid development of new technologies, I note with satisfaction that the Group reached consensus on adjusting the scope of category V to include rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles.

The issue of the international transfer of small arms and light weapons is of great importance to many Member States. Further to and with the additional benefit of reinforcing the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which addresses the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, some Member States have been calling for the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the Register. As a result, previous iterations of the Group introduced and maintained the “seven-plus-one formula” to allow for reporting those weapons. While the Group did not agree to elevate small arms and light weapons to a full category of the Register, the consensus to use the description for small arms and light weapons taken from the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons for reporting under the seven-plus-one formula represents an important step in solidifying the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the Register.

Member States are encouraged, through the Register, in addition to their reporting on international transfers of conventional arms, to provide information on procurement through national production and on military holdings. In this regard, the Group has recommended that I to continue to invite Member States to provide additional background information, including by using new optional reference reporting forms.

Furthermore, the Group updated the simplified “nil” reporting forms to operationalize the rolling “nil” returns, made recommendations on practical measures to promote participation in and use of the Register and provided elements to inform the next review of the Register.

I am grateful to all the experts who contributed to the work of the Group. I am especially pleased that almost half the Group’s members were women. I thank the Chair of the Group for her leadership, which enabled the Group to fully discharge its mandate and generate an important outcome adopted by consensus.

Letter of transmittal

17 June 2022

It is my pleasure to submit to you the report of the 2022 Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register and its further development, as convened by the Secretary-General, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 74/53. The report, which was adopted by consensus, is the outcome of substantive discussions held over three sessions in Geneva and New York from March to June 2022.

In the midst of heightened global tensions and mistrust among nations, this year marked the thirtieth anniversary of the functioning of the Register. It also presented the Group with the alarming fact that the preceding year had recorded the lowest rate of participation of Member States in the Register since its existence. This prompted the Group to reflect deeply on how to revitalize participation levels and on ways of strengthening the Register so that it may function as an effective transparency and confidence-building measure that can contribute substantially to achieving international peace and security. The Group reaffirmed the Register's unique role as a voluntary and inclusive confidence-building mechanism in which all States Members of the United Nations are requested to report on their international transfers of conventional arms. The Group deliberated on how the Register could be better attuned to reflect the international security challenges of the twenty-first century and technological advancements.

Taking an evolutionary approach, the Group considered and built upon the recommendations made by the 2019 Group. We recommend the amendment of category V of the Register to distinguish between manned and unmanned systems, the use of a description of small arms and light weapons for reporting for the "plus 1 category", along with the seven main categories of the Register, and updated simplified "nil" reporting forms for "rolling nil" returns, and reference reporting forms for additional background information on "military holdings" and "procurement through national production". In addition, we made detailed recommendations addressed to the secretariat and to Member States to promote participation in the Register.

I was delighted to participate, along with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, in a commemorative event to celebrate the Register's thirtieth anniversary. We examined the history and successes of the Register and addressed ways in which the Register could better fulfil the objectives for which it was established.

I thank the Group for placing their confidence in me and electing me as their Chair. Drawing from their vast expertise, the experts made valuable contributions and worked constructively as a team, which was key for meaningful and comprehensive deliberations. I am happy that our association will continue through a newly established "informal group of friends", which will provide support to the secretariat and Member States in implementing the recommendations contained in the report and revitalizing the Register.

On behalf of the Group, I express our gratitude to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs for her guidance and encouragement. We thank the Secretary of the Group, Ivor Fung, and Takuma Haga from the Office for Disarmament Affairs, for their support throughout the entire process and for being open and responsive to our suggestions. We acknowledge the outstanding work done by Paul Holtom and Anna Mensah, who skilfully captured the essence of the discussions and provided sound technical input, which contributed to the overall quality of the report.

(Signed) Muanpuii **Saiawi**
Chair, Group of Governmental Experts
on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

I. Introduction

1. The report of the 2022 Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register Arms and its further development consists of three sections.¹

2. The first section consists of an introduction to the establishment of the Register and its main objectives and operation, and a summary of the recommendations of all previous iterations of the Group.

3. The second section of the report contains three subsections that present the discussions of the Group regarding the participation, scope and use of the Register. In section II.A, data and information submitted for the 30 years of the Register's existence are presented, focusing on the period 2017–2020, before measures to help to revitalize participation in the Register and the role of the secretariat in this regard are considered. Section II.B contains an outline of the proposals to expand the scope of the Register, with descriptions of the exchange of views relating to amendments to the categories of conventional arms covered by the Register and changes in the status of additional background information that Member States are invited to submit. In section II.C, access to the Register is considered and the use and application of data and information contained in the Register and its contribution to building trust and confidence among Member States are examined.

4. Section III presents the Group's conclusions and recommendations to enhance the continuing operation and relevance of the Register, as well as its further development.

A. Establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

5. The General Assembly, by its resolution [46/36 L](#) entitled “Transparency in armaments”, requested the Secretary-General to establish and maintain a universal and non-discriminatory Register of Conventional Arms. According to that resolution, the objective of the Register was to prevent excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms in order to enhance confidence, promote stability, help States to exercise restraint, ease tensions and strengthen regional and international peace and security. Member States were called upon to provide annually to the Register data on the export and import of conventional arms in the seven categories covered by the Register, and were invited to include information on military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant national policies, pending the expansion of its scope.

6. Pursuant to that resolution, the Secretary-General convened a panel of governmental technical experts in 1992 to bring the Register into operation. The General Assembly, in endorsing the recommendations of the Panel ([A/47/342](#) and [Corr.1](#)), called upon all Member States to provide the requested data and information to the Secretary-General annually, beginning in 1993 (resolution [47/52](#), para. 4).

¹ Throughout the present report, reference to “the Group” indicates that all experts in the Group agreed on analysis or the point being made, whereas the use of the term “experts” indicates that there were different views within the Group on the analysis of the issue under consideration or the view being expressed.

B. Commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Register

7. The 2022 Group met on the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Register and the convening of the panel of governmental technical experts, which played an essential role in putting the Register into operation.

8. Experts participated in an event to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Register on 17 May 2022. The event was organized by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, with support from the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). Participants examined the history and successes of the Register and explored its prospects for the coming 30 years, with a view to raising awareness among Member States on the importance and relevance of the Register for building confidence among Member States and strengthening international peace and security. Speakers highlighted the high level of participation in the Register at the turn of the millennium and the way in which the Register served as a point of reference for other multilateral, regional and subregional conventional arms control instruments and confidence-building mechanisms. The event also addressed ways in which the Register could contribute to other United Nations initiatives to strengthen international peace and security, as well as sustainable development.

9. The event stimulated discussion in the 2022 Group on ways to reinvigorate the Register and ensure that it was not regarded as an instrument designed to deal with the international peace and security challenges only of the late twentieth century, but rather would remain an important transparency and confidence-building mechanism for Member States for the future. In that regard, experts highlighted the importance of considering how the Register could be included in the Secretary-General's forthcoming "New Agenda for Peace". The Group recognized that recent developments in open-source information had increased transparency in the international arms trade, acquisitions and military holdings, but that open-source information could not replace the Register's contribution to confidence-building because it contained data and information provided by Member States. Therefore, the Register should remain a central instrument for United Nations efforts to promote and facilitate confidence-building among Member States to enhance international peace and security, thus enabling sustainable development.

C. Review of the Register

10. In its resolution [46/36 L](#), the General Assembly decided to look at the Register's future expansion and to keep the scope of and participation in the Register under review, which is also reflected in the 1992 report of the panel of technical experts. As a result, the Register has been periodically reviewed at three-year intervals, with the exception of the 2013 Group, which was convened four years after the 2009 Group.

1994–2016 Groups of Governmental Experts

11. The General Assembly took note of the report of the 1994 Group and decided to keep the scope of and participation in the Register under review, requesting Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views in that regard, as well as on transparency measures related to weapons of mass destruction. The recommendations contained in the report of the Group were endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution [49/75 C](#).

12. The 1997 Group continued to elaborate on technical procedures to ensure the effective operation of the Register. It proposed extending the reporting deadline from 30 April to 31 May and encouraged the submission of information on national points of contact and the use of the "Remarks" column in the reporting format ([A/52/316](#)).

It also recommended that the annual reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly include information, provided on a voluntary basis, on procurement through national production and on military holdings. The recommendations contained in the report of the Group were endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution [53/77 V](#).

13. The 2000 Group recommended, with a view to encouraging greater participation in the Register, the holding of a series of regional and subregional workshops with the assistance of interested Member States; the introduction of a simplified form for providing “nil” returns for Member States that had no international transfers to report; and the updating of the United Nations information booklet on the Register ([A/55/281](#)). It also agreed that the Register covered conventional arms only and that therefore the question of transparency of weapons of mass destruction was an issue that should be addressed by the General Assembly. The recommendations contained in the report of the Group were endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution [57/75](#).

14. The 2003 Group concluded that considerable progress had been made towards achieving a relatively high level of participation in the Register ([A/58/274](#)). It recommended lowering the reporting threshold of large-calibre artillery systems from 100 to 75 mm in category III and the inclusion, on an exceptional basis, of man-portable air-defence systems as a subcategory in category VII. In addition, it noted that Member States that were in a position to do so could provide additional background information on international transfers of small arms and light weapons made or modified to military specifications and intended for military use. The recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [58/54](#).

15. The 2006 Group recommended that the reporting threshold of “Warships” under category VI be reduced from 750 to 500 metric tons ([A/61/261](#)). It recommended that Member States in a position to do so should provide additional background information and utilize the optional standardized reporting form on the international transfer of small arms and light weapons, developed by the Group for reporting such transfers. The Group also began to discuss the issue of reporting the international transfer of armed unmanned aerial vehicles in the context of the Register. The recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [61/77](#).

16. The 2009 Group recommended that efforts continue to ensure the Register’s relevance for all regions and to enhance the universal participation by Member States ([A/64/296](#)). In particular, it recommended that measures be undertaken to assist Member States in building capacity for the submission of meaningful reports, including on small arms and light weapons, and adjusted the standardized reporting forms to simplify them. Furthermore, it recommended that the Secretary-General seek the views of Member States on whether the continued absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register had limited the relevance of the Register, therewith directly affecting decisions on the participation of Member States in the instrument. The Group continued the discussion on reporting international transfers of armed unmanned aerial vehicles. The recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [64/54](#).

17. The 2013 Group recommended that Member States reporting the international transfer of armed unmanned aerial vehicles do so using categories IV and V of the Register ([A/68/140](#)). It repeated the recommendation of the 2009 Group that the Secretary-General seek the views of Member States on whether the continued absence of small arms and light weapons as a main category in the Register had limited the relevance of the Register and directly affected decisions on participation. It also strongly recommended enhanced budgetary support and human resources from within the Conventional Arms Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs for the maintenance and promotion of the Register. The Group encouraged Member States in

a position to do so to provide voluntary contributions to the secretariat and render assistance, upon request, to Member States to build capacity to submit reports to the Register. The recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [68/43](#).

18. The 2016 Group recommended that the title of category IV of the Register be amended to “Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles”, reflecting the recommendation to introduce a subcategory for reporting on the import and export of unmanned combat aerial vehicles ([A/71/259](#)). The Group also recommended that the Secretary-General appeal to Member States to apply, on a trial basis, a “seven-plus-one formula” for reporting on their international transfers of small arms and light weapons to inform the deliberations of future Groups of Governmental Experts on the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as an eighth category in the Register. The Group recommended that the secretariat distribute a questionnaire to Member States to solicit their views on national reporting systems and challenges, as well as the extent to which the absence of a category on small arms and light weapons limited the Register’s relevance and affected decisions on participation directly. Furthermore, the Group recommended that Member States be permitted to submit a rolling “nil” return that could be valid for a maximum of three years. The Group also recommended that Member States consider providing financial support to enable the secretariat to reissue the “Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms”, with additional information to enhance the effectiveness of national points of contact and national reporting mechanisms, as well as to prioritize the translation of the online reporting tool into the six official languages of the United Nations. The recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [71/44](#).

2019 Group of Governmental Experts

19. The 2019 Group recommended that Member States, in a position to do so use the seven-plus-one formula to provide information on the export and import of small arms and light weapons ([A/74/211](#)). The 2019 Group recommended that the next Group continue the discussion on the potential expansion of the scope of the Register, including categories covered by the Register, small arms and light weapons, procurement through national production, military holdings, relevant policies, and explore the relationship between participation, scope and use of the Register. The Group recommended a series of measures to promote participation in the Register, addressed to both the secretariat and Member States. In that regard, the Group recommended that the secretariat maintain regular contact with secretariats of relevant international instruments, including the Arms Trade Treaty, to enable the Register’s secretariat to engage in direct communication with Member States that had provided data on exports and imports of conventional arms for other relevant instruments but that had not participated in the Register. The Group also recommended the use of the Register in relevant confidence-building mechanisms. The recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [74/53](#).

2022 Group of Governmental Experts

20. The 2022 Group of Governmental Experts was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution [74/53](#), by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register and its further development, including by exploring the relationship between the participation, scope and use of the Register and its further development, taking into account the work of the Conference on Disarmament, relevant deliberations within the United Nations, the views expressed by Member States and the reports of the Secretary-General on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development.

II. Review of the relevance and continuing operation of the Register and its further development

1. Relevance of the Register

21. The 2022 Group continued the approach promoted by the 2019 Group for examining the Register's relevance and further development by considering the relationship between participation, scope and use. Therefore, the Group again demonstrated the importance of reviewing the Register with regard not only to the level of participation and scope of the Register, but also to how the instrument could be used to contribute to transparency and confidence-building among Member States and to enable the identification of excessive and destabilizing accumulations of conventional arms. Experts recalled the evolutionary development of the Register over its 30 years of existence, noting the ability of the Group to enhance its operation and amend its scope to ensure its continuing relevance and promote participation by Member States.

22. The Group emphasized that the Register was the only global transparency and confidence-building mechanism in the field of conventional arms and that it had made a significant contribution to increasing transparency in the areas of the international transfer of conventional arms, procurement through national production and military holdings. Presentations delivered to the Group indicated that some 90 per cent of the world's international transfers of major conventional arms covered by the Register's seven categories were reported to the Register, thanks to regular reporting by the largest exporters. The Group recalled that the Register did not have an impact on the ability of Member States to acquire conventional arms for legitimate national defence purposes in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. It provides an opportunity for the sharing of information on the export and import of conventional arms with other Member States to build trust and confidence to maintain international peace and security, and to contribute to early warning and conflict prevention efforts. The Group called for the reinvigoration of the Register on its thirtieth anniversary. Against a backdrop of international tension and mistrust, the Group emphasized the importance of not losing this global trust- and confidence-building transparency mechanism.

2. Description of the mandate of the 2022 Group of Governmental Experts and the organization of work

23. The Group reviewed the data and information submitted by Member States for the period 2000–2020, as presented in statistical tables and graphs compiled by the Office for Disarmament Affairs. In addition, the Group reviewed relevant work undertaken within the United Nations framework, including the reports of previous Groups, and a background paper prepared by the Office. The Group benefited from working papers prepared by governmental experts on issues relating to participation, amendments to the scope of the seven categories, the creation of an eighth category for reporting small arms and light weapons, the provision of information on the model and type of conventional arms, and changing the status of providing information on procurement through national production and military holdings. The Group's deliberations were also informed by presentations by the Office, the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute and UNIDIR. The Group used the different materials in its deliberations for developing conclusions and recommendations for enhancing the operation of the Register and ensuring its continued relevance for Member States.

A. Participation and promotion of participation in the Register

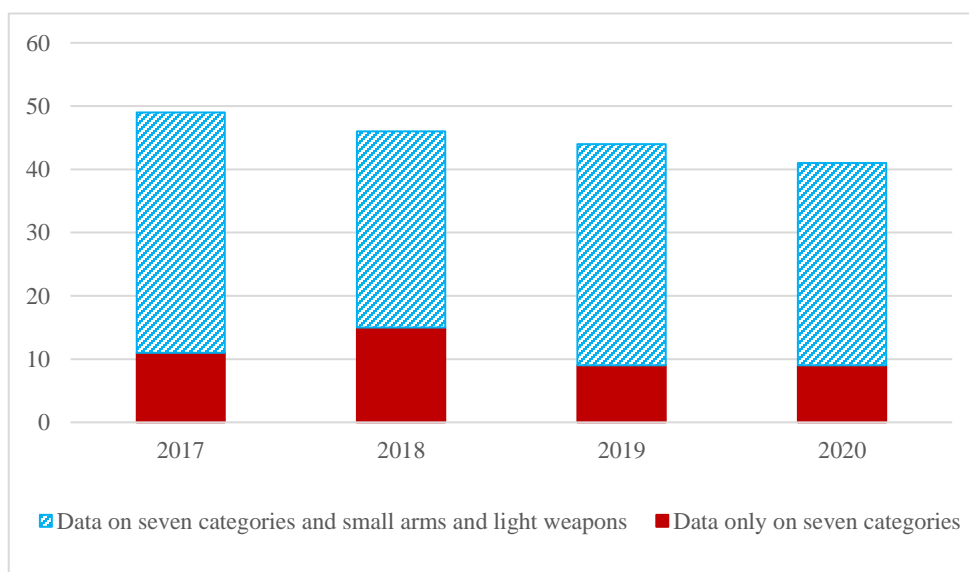
1. Data and additional information submitted to the Register during the period 2017–2020

24. Forty-nine Member States provided information to the secretariat on their import and export of the Register's seven categories of conventional arms during 2017, of which 38 (78 per cent) used the seven-plus-one formula.² Forty-six Member States submitted information for 2018, of which 32 (70 per cent) reported using the seven-plus-one formula, while the corresponding figures for 2019 were 44 and 36 (81 per cent) and for 2020 were 41 and 32 (78 per cent) (see figure I). The level of reporting for 2020 sets the lowest level of participation in the Register's history. Figures II and III provide the regional breakdown for overall submissions for the imports and exports that took place during the period 2017–2020.

25. The annual average reporting rate for the period 2017–2020 was 45 Member States, with 59 participating at least once in the Register during the period. By comparison, there was an annual average of 53 Member States for 2013–2016, with 78 participating at least once during the period. For the period 2000–2003, the average number of annual submissions was 118, and 144 Member States reported at least once during that period. Twenty-six Member States have never participated in the Register.

Figure I

Number of submissions to the Register containing data only on seven categories, compared with submissions containing data on seven categories and small arms and light weapons, 2017–2020



² The information on participation in the Register presented in this section is correct as at 17 June 2022. Member States that did not participate during the period 2017–2020 can still provide submissions containing data and information for this period. Therefore, the figures presented here could be different in the future.

Figure II
Number of countries participating in the Register, by regional group, 2017–2020

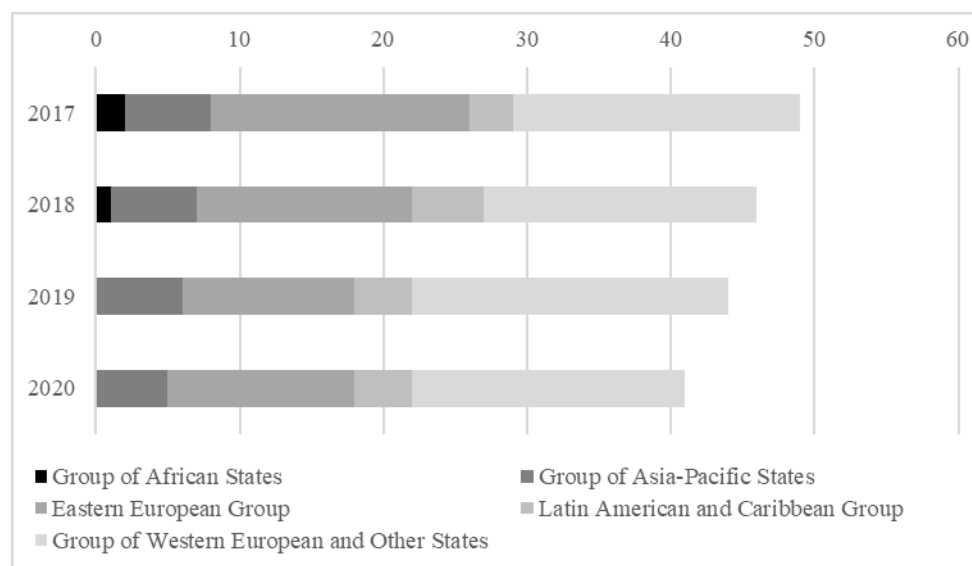
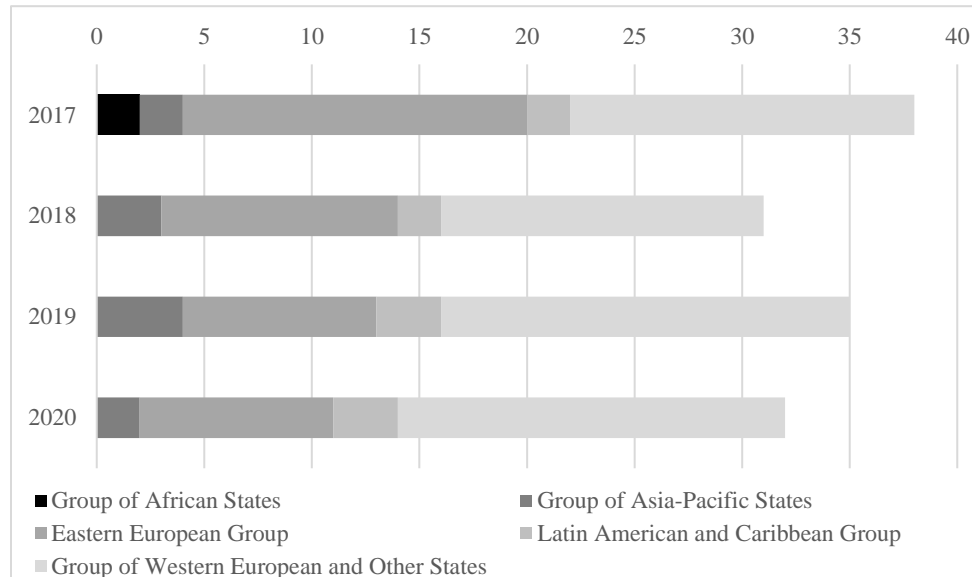


Figure III
Number of countries using the “seven-plus-one formula” for submissions, by regional group, 2017–2020



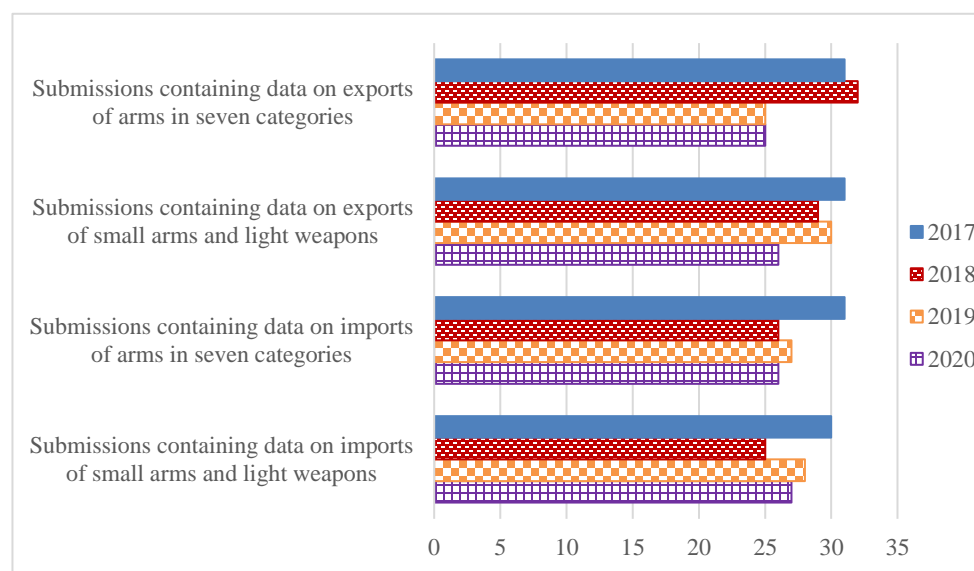
Reports on exports and imports

26. The level of reporting for the export and import of conventional arms in the seven categories of the Register showed a decline between 2017 and 2020 (see figure III). During the period 2017–2020, the average number of annual submissions of Member States that included data on exports for the seven categories of the Register was 28, and the same number was recorded for imports. These data represent only a slight decline compared with the period 2013–2016 for exports, for which there was an average of 30 submissions and the same number for imports (28).

27. Twenty-three Member States reported the export of small arms and light weapons in accordance with the seven-plus-one formula for the first year of its use (i.e., submissions made in 2017 for exports that took place during 2016). For 2017, 31 submissions included information on exports and 30 on imports. For 2018, 29 provided data on exports and 25 on imports, and 30 reported exports and 28 for imports for 2019. For 2020, 26 submissions included data on exports and 27 on imports (see figure IV).

Figure IV

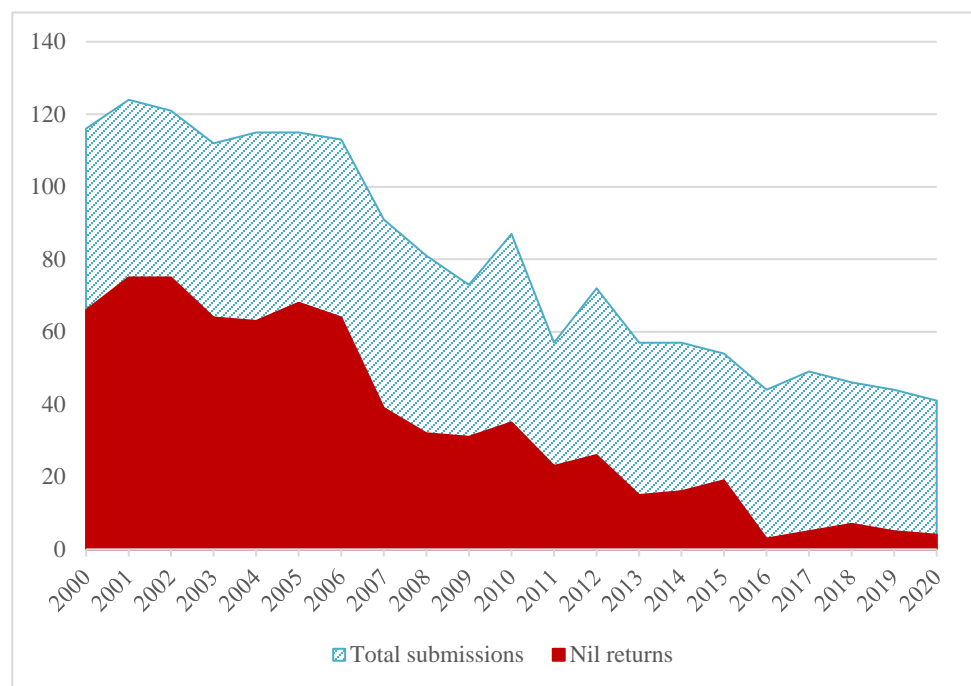
Number of reports on exports and imports for the seven categories and for small arms and light weapons, 2017–2020



“Nil” returns

28. The number of “nil” returns submitted during the period 2017–2020 was the lowest on record for the Register, with an annual average of five (see figure V). By comparison, the annual average of “nil” returns submitted during the period 2013–2016 was 13, while it was 51 for 2000–2003. For 2020, “nil” returns accounted for 10 per cent of submissions, 11 per cent for 2019, 15 per cent for 2018 and 10 per cent for 2017. The annual average for 2013–2016 was 24 per cent, compared with 59 per cent for 2000–2003.

Figure V
Number of “nil” returns provided to the Register, 2000–2020



Additional background information

Procurement through national production

29. Since 1992, 48 Member States have provided additional background information on procurement through national production at least once. An annual average of 9 Member States provided additional background information on procurement through national production for the period 2017–2020, compared with an annual average of 15 for 2013–2016 (see figure VI).

Military holdings

30. Since 1992, 54 Member States have provided additional background information on military holdings at least once. An annual average of 19 Member States provided additional background information on military holdings during the period 2017–2020, compared with an annual average of 23 for 2013–2016 (see figure VI).

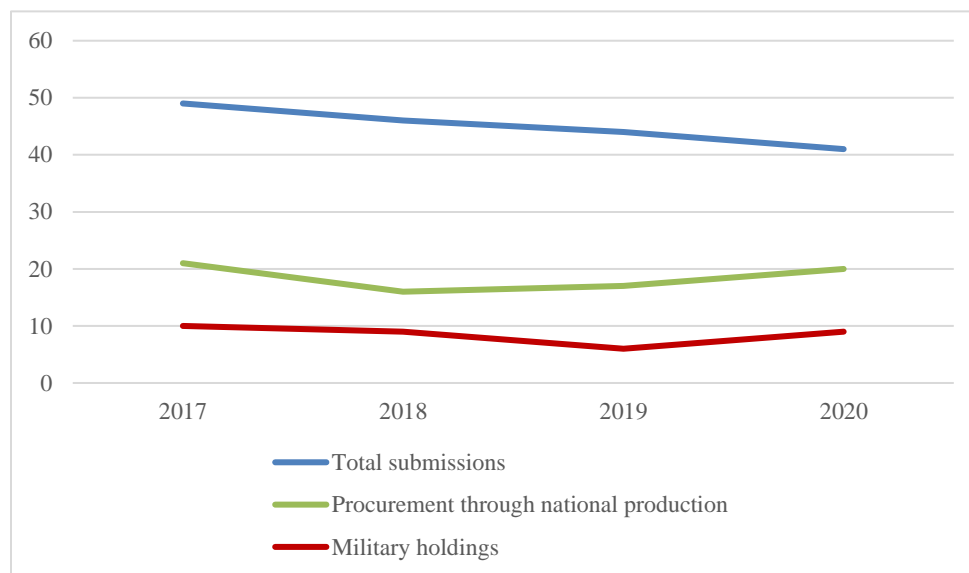
Relevant policies and views on the Register

31. The online database and reports of the Secretary-General indicate that at least eight Member States provided additional background information on their relevant policies to the Register during the period 2017–2020. At least 46 Member States provided information on whether the data in their submissions during that period referred to actual or authorized imports and exports, of which 37 reported on actual transfers and 6 on authorized transfers, and 3 indicated a mixed approach under which data on the seven categories referred to actual transfers and data on the import and export of small arms and light weapons referred to authorizations. At least five Member States provided views on the future operation of the Register during those years, two of which called for a strengthening of the link between Arms Trade Treaty reporting and Register submissions. One Member State’s views noted a problem in

using the Register's online reporting tool, adding that its Arms Trade Treaty annual report was submitted to the Register's secretariat. That Member State expressed a desire to use one online reporting tool to enable reporting to both the Arms Trade Treaty and to the Register. It also requested the ability to upload a spreadsheet to overcome the "laborious and difficult" process of inputting data using the online reporting tool.

Figure VI

Provision by Member States of additional background information on procurement through national production and military holdings, 2017–2020



2. Consideration of the current status

32. While commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Register, the Group regarded the current status of participation as approaching crisis levels, with the lowest rate of participation in its history. The Group therefore focused its attention on how to reverse the declining participation for such an important confidence-building and security mechanism, identifying concrete measures to promote and revitalize participation in the Register. Experts emphasized the importance of tailoring measures to promote participation, taking into account different regional and subregional circumstances that influence participation.

33. Experts introduced and examined a range of factors for the decline. One of the major impediments to reporting is that Member States have limited capacities for collecting and compiling submissions for the Register. Experts considered that the lack of dedicated personnel to coordinate Register submissions, or regular changes in personnel responsible for the Register, had a negative impact on participation by many Member States. The impact of different national administrative structures and their financial and human resources were also considered in that regard, with the experts noting that, while strong inter-agency coordination practices had enabled reporting, that approach was not easily established in all Member States.

34. Experts noted that there appeared to be a decline in political will in some Member States to participate in the Register. In this regard, it is notable that the decline in the submission of "nil" returns correlates strongly with the decrease in the number of submissions in recent years. Experts noted that, in order for Member States to have the necessary political will, the Register must be seen to address the most

pressing security needs of many Member States, for whom terrorism and organized crime are of paramount concern. In this regard, experts considered that one way to increase political will and commitment by Member States that regard small arms and light weapons as one of the most destabilizing categories of conventional arms was to include small arms and light weapons as an eighth category to increase the Register's relevance. At the same time, experts also noted that the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as an eighth category would mean that many Member States would no longer be able to submit "nil" returns and that this could mean an additional burden for reporting in Member States with limited resources and capacities for compiling and providing submissions to the Register.

35. The Group also reflected on the secretariat's capacity to facilitate Member State participation in the Register. In that regard, while the Group highlighted the responsibility of Member States to ensure the appointment of a national point of contact for the Register and the sharing of contact information with the secretariat, the Group emphasized the importance of the secretariat ensuring that it had an up-to-date list of points of contact to ensure regular communication with national points of contact.

36. Experts noted that the online reporting tool and online database (<https://www.unroca.org>) were available only in English. This is likely to have affected participation in Africa and the Americas, regions in which French and Spanish are widely used. It was noted that the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat had made its online reporting tool available in the six official languages of the United Nations and that this appeared to have enabled reporting by Member States that did not report to the Register, notwithstanding the fact that the contents of the Arms Trade Treaty annual report and Register submission could be the same.

37. Building on the previous point, experts enquired as to whether the secretariat had actively followed up on the recommendation of the 2019 Group of Governmental Experts to maintain regular contact with the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat and engage in direct communication with Member States that had provided data on the import and export of conventional arms in their Arms Trade Treaty annual report but that had not submitted such data to the Register. The Group discussed whether more could be done by the secretariat to ensure that States that reported to other instruments on the export and import of conventional arms could be encouraged to provide such data to the Register.

3. Measures to revitalize and promote participation in the Register

38. As recommended by the 2019 Group in its report (A/74/211, para. 123), the Group reviewed the implementation of measures to be taken by the secretariat and by Member States to promote participation in the Register. The Group elaborated on measures recommended by previous Groups, seeking to identify ways in which such measures could be implemented or further enhanced to improve participation in the Register and proposing new measures. The measures directed at the secretariat included enhancing engagement with points of contact through regular communication and the provision of materials (e.g., regularly update the "Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms") and in-person and online training to build national capacity and to enable each point of contact to serve as an advocate for the Register at the national level. The Group considered options for the secretariat to create and make available a database of Register points of contact to also facilitate direct peer-to-peer exchanges. The Group also considered whether updating the simplified "nil" reporting form to reflect the possibility of submitting a rolling "nil" return for the seven categories of the Register and for the seven-plus-one formula could increase the use of that option and overall participation. In addition, the Group considered the potential benefits of

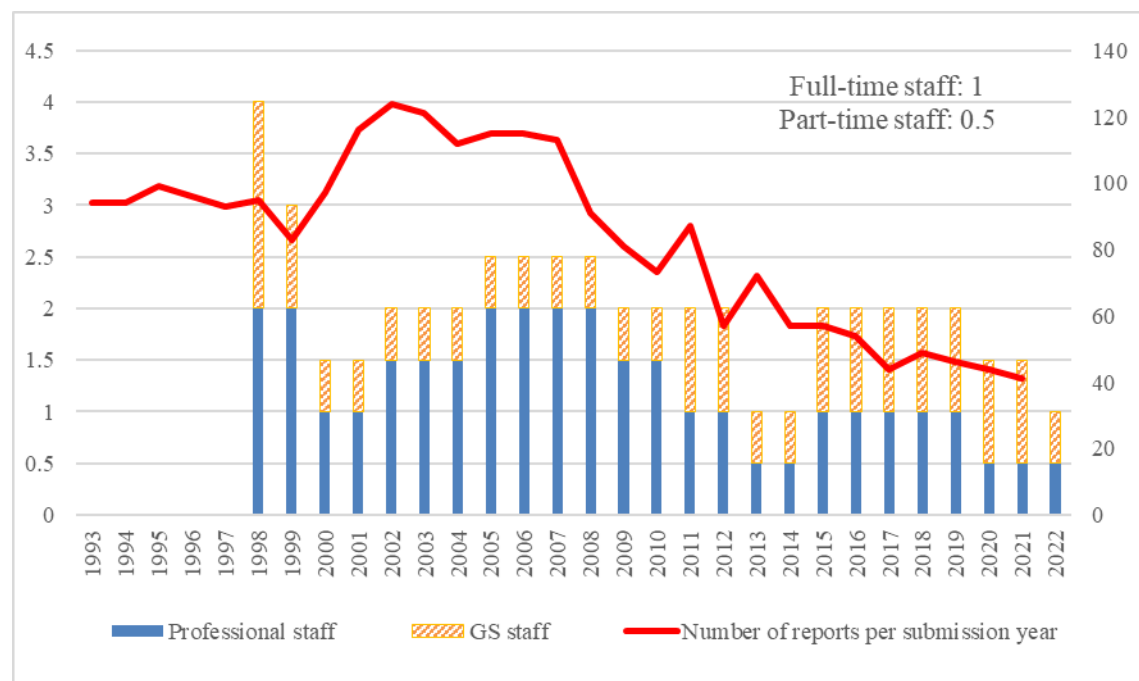
strengthening cooperation with a broad range of entities that use information contained in the Register, including parliamentarians, academics, civil society and think tanks that analyse arms control and disarmament issues. The Group also considered the promotion of the Register in connection with trust- and confidence-building efforts at the regional and subregional levels, as well as strengthening cooperation with the secretariats of relevant international, regional and subregional instruments, to be important ways to increase participation in the Register.

39. The Group recognized that participation in the Register was the responsibility of Member States. Given the range of measures that the secretariat could undertake to promote and enable Member State participation in the Register, Member States should request that the Office for Disarmament Affairs provide a regular budgetary line to support the sustainable and predictable functioning of the Register secretariat, which would help it to recruit and retain experienced and knowledgeable staff. Providing contact details for points of contact to the secretariat is an important step for enabling Member State participation in the Register. Experts considered that effective national inter-agency coordination and information-sharing mechanisms could help to ensure timely and regular participation in the Register and related relevant instruments. The Group also noted that Member States could conduct peer-to-peer cooperation, as well as other international cooperation and assistance programmes that support capacity-building, in order to report on international arms transfers. The Group discussed a new initiative to establish an “informal group of friends” that would work closely with the secretariat and Member States to promote greater participation in the Register, which could develop outreach and training tools and support secretariat efforts to secure adequate budgetary and human resources to effectively promote and support Member State participation in the Register.

4. Role of the secretariat

40. The Group stressed the importance of an adequately resourced secretariat that is able to fulfil the tasks ascribed to it by previous Groups of Governmental Experts on a sustained basis to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Register and promote universal participation. It expressed concern that the secretariat did not have adequate human resources to undertake its core tasks on the Register, recognizing that the situation had affected the ability of the secretariat to implement the measures to promote participation that were recommended in the 2019 Group’s report (*ibid.*, para. 122). The secretariat provided the Group with information on its staffing levels for the period 1998–2022, showing the fluctuations in staffing levels alongside the trend in participation (see figure VII). In recent years, the secretariat has not had Professional staff with the primary responsibility of overseeing United Nations transparency and confidence-building instruments, including the Register. Different staff members have been tasked with maintaining the Register for short periods of time, alongside other responsibilities and tasks. These staff have therefore been unable to communicate with national points of contact regularly and consistently and have been limited in their ability to operate and maintain the Register. The Group considered several recommendations for addressing that situation.

Figure VII
Secretariat staffing levels for overseeing United Nations transparency and confidence-building instruments, compared with participation in the Register



Note: Professional staff perform managerial and political responsibilities; General Service staff provide administrative and clerical support

41. The secretariat elaborated on the measures that it undertakes to promote and enable participation in the Register, sharing information with the Group on how it had implemented some of the measures recommended in the 2019 Group's report (*ibid.*). The secretariat confirmed that it circulated a note verbale to Member States, to permanent missions in New York and to national points of contact annually in order to remind them of their political commitment to participating in the Register and the modalities for participation. It also sends a subsequent reminder. It sends a further reminder to Member States that participate regularly in the Register but that had not provided a submission by 31 July. Experts noted that the secretariat had not always confirmed receipt of submissions and that there had been significant delays in entering data and information into the online database. The secretariat explained that there were delays in including submissions in the online database if the Member State did not use the online reporting tool (e.g., national submissions sent by email in PDF format), given that this means that the secretariat entered the data manually. Member States should receive an automatic response when their submission has been received by the secretariat, while the secretariat ensures that submitted data and information are included in the online database as soon as possible after submission.

42. The secretariat organizes briefing sessions on the sidelines of international meetings on conventional arms to raise awareness of the Register and provides guidance on how to submit data and information for the Register. It also makes information available to Member States on opportunities for international cooperation and assistance to build national capacity to collect and compile data and information for Register submissions. Outreach activities include efforts to maintain effective communication not only with points of contact, but also with specialized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to promote participation in United Nations

transparency and confidence-building instruments. Although the secretariat needs accurate and up-to-date contact details for points of contact for the operation of the Register, achieving this remains a challenge. The secretariat often relies on permanent missions in New York to ensure that such information is up to date.

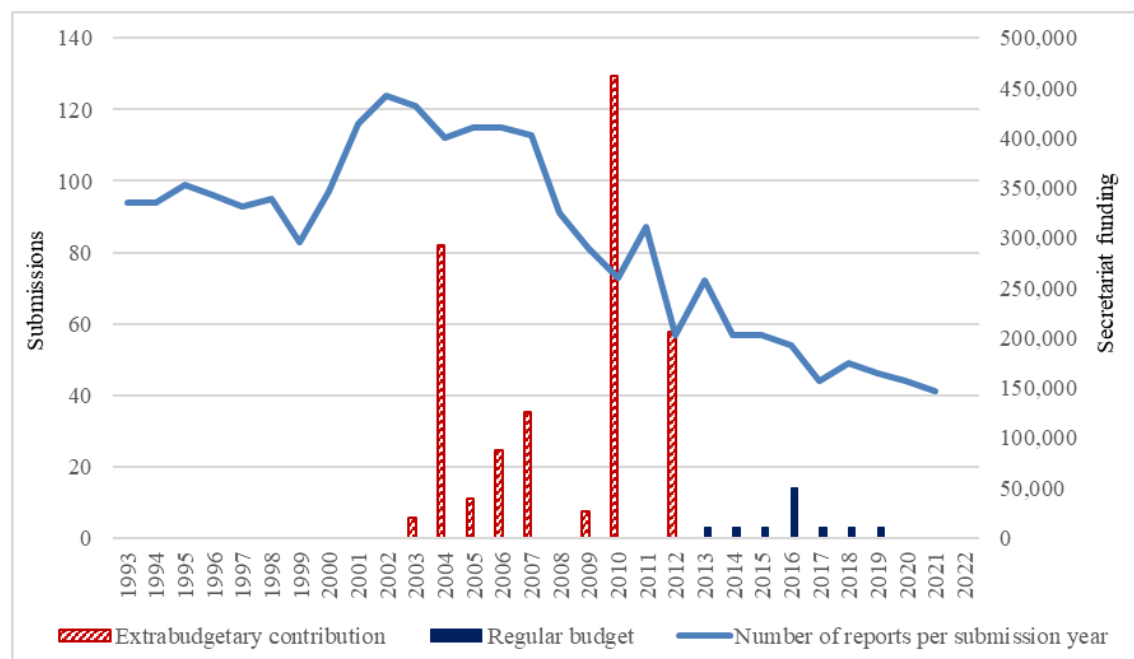
43. The secretariat continues to explore ways to enhance cooperation with secretariats of relevant international, regional and subregional reporting instruments on the export and import of conventional arms.

44. The secretariat explained that resources had not yet been made available through the regular budget to translate the online reporting tool into the six official languages of the United Nations but that the recommendation contained in the 2019 Group's report would be included in a future workplan for the secretariat. The Register's online database would also be updated as part of an overhaul of the databases maintained by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which should provide for improved data visualization and analysis for users. The secretariat has not updated the "Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms". The Group welcomed the secretariat's willingness to do this in connection with commemorations of the thirtieth anniversary of the Register. Experts therefore requested information on the financial resources that had been made available to the secretariat to undertake core tasks and fulfil recommendations made by previous Groups of Governmental Experts (see figure VIII).

Figure VIII

Secretariat funding for United Nations transparency and confidence-building instruments, compared with number of submissions in the Register, 1993–2021

(United States dollars)



B. Review and expansion of scope of the Register

45. To facilitate the review of the current scope of the Register, experts prepared working papers to inform the Group's deliberations on the scope of the Register, small arms and light weapons, information on model and type for transferred items,

procurement through national production, and military holdings. The Group considered proposals contained within the experts' working papers to clarify the current scope of the Register and to expand its scope. The examination of proposals to amend the descriptions for existing categories or expand the scope of the Register took into account how changes would contribute to increasing the Register's relevance for addressing security concerns and its use by Member States, as well as the potential impact on participation.

46. The Group recognized that Member States needed to mobilize resources to participate in the Register. Appropriate resources would be made available only if there was political will to support participation in the Register. For there to be sufficient political will, the Register needed to be relevant for Member States, and a primary factor for that relevance would come from the scope of the Register. Therefore, experts examined not only proposals for amending the scope of the Register in relation to the Register's role in assisting in identifying excessive and destabilizing accumulations of conventional arms and for transparency and confidence-building purposes, but also the extent to which it could contribute to addressing other security concerns of Member States.

1. Seven categories covered by the Register

47. The Group reviewed proposals to amend the descriptions and titles of categories II to VII of the Register, using the descriptions contained in the 2019 Group's report (*ibid.*, paras. 54–60) and proposals introduced by experts participating in the 2022 Group. The proposals led to a discussion on ways to address the role of force projection and force multiplier equipment in the Register, different understandings of offensive and defensive weapons, and different approaches for Member States to provide data on the international transfer of unmanned and remotely piloted weapon systems that fulfil the characteristics outlined in the descriptions of the Register's seven categories.

48. The Group noted that the current descriptions for the Register's seven categories focused on conventional arms that had immediate war-fighting capabilities by firing, launching or delivering ammunition or munitions. Proposals to amend the descriptions of categories II, IV and V to cover equipment that provides force projection and force multiplier capabilities for national armed forces would therefore introduce new types of military equipment into the Register. Experts highlighted that some of the proposed additions to the Register could increase the scope of conventional arms included in the Register significantly and could therefore play an important role in identifying an excessive and destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms and in the invasion of another Member State. While the proposal for including such military equipment could increase the reporting burden for Member States, experts noted that only small quantities of important force projection and force multiplier systems were transferred each year. In those cases, the reporting burden would be limited. Experts considered whether a new category should be created for including force projection and force multiplier military equipment in the Register or whether amended descriptions for categories II, IV and V could be used alongside new subcategories. While considering a proposal to amend the description for category VII, experts shared their understandings of the terms "offensive" and "defensive" in relation to weapon systems and national military doctrine. In those cases, the Group noted that the importance of finding a balance to ensure that the Register captured military equipment that could increase insecurity in some regions, while not making the Register more complex or burdensome for reporting.

49. The Group discussed several issues in relation to the extent to which the current seven categories included unmanned or remotely piloted conventional arms that exhibited the characteristics listed in the current descriptions of those categories,

noting the specific reference to such items in categories IV and VII. First, experts shared their assessments of technological developments in the aerial, ground and marine domains that had taken place since the 2019 Group. Experts considered whether Register descriptions should be amended only when a category of unmanned weapon system was mature and international transfers were taking place or whether descriptions should be amended in advance of such systems entering into service, especially if sufficient information was already known about their potential capabilities. Second, in distinguishing its work from that of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, the Group emphasized that it focused on ensuring that data on the international transfer of all weapon systems that met the technical characteristics contained in category descriptions were reported to the Register. Third, experts noted the way in which some commercially available unmanned aerial systems were being adapted for use in attacks by terrorist and criminal organizations. The Group emphasized that the Register should not require Member States to report international transfers of unmanned fixed wing or rotary-wing aircraft that are designed and used for agricultural use, delivery purposes or other civilian services. Member States that acquire such systems and adapt them, so that they match the descriptions for categories IV and V, should be reported to the Register. Fourth, the Group considered the merits of changing references to “unmanned systems” to “uncrewed systems”, following a presentation by UNIDIR, noting that the term could cover both systems that are remotely piloted and navigated autonomously, and the fact that the term is gender-neutral. Fifth, the Group considered how to clearly show that the unmanned systems that fulfil the technical characteristics and functional aspects of Register categories should be included in Register submissions.

50. Experts shared their views on the two approaches that have been used to address the issue of unmanned systems in relation to category descriptions and whether they could be used for future proposals for amendments to categories I, II, V and VI:

(a) Create subcategories, mirroring the current approach for category IV;

(b) Encourage the provision of model and type information for international transfers of such systems, in line with the recommendation for reporting on rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles under category V, as contained in the 2019 Group’s report (*ibid.*, para. 114).

In this regard, and with reference to the 2019 Group’s report (*ibid.*, para. 103), the Group examined a proposal to clearly show that the unmanned systems that fulfil the technical characteristics and functional aspects of any Register category should be reported by including the following text with the list of current category descriptions:

Throughout the Categories of the Register, all descriptions should be considered to include both manned and unmanned systems unless otherwise specified in an individual description. Member States are encouraged to use the “description of item” column of the reporting form to identify unmanned systems, as appropriate.

Experts cautioned that the new proposal would represent a very different approach, compared with that traditionally taken by the Group for amending the Register’s scope to explicitly include language referring to reporting on international transfers of unmanned systems that fulfil the technical parameters contained in the descriptions for existing Register categories.

51. The Group considered a proposal to “request” rather than “invite” Member States to provide information on the type and model of conventional arms when submitting data on exports and imports for the Register’s seven categories using the “description of items” column in their Register submissions. The provision of such

qualitative information shows the capabilities of what is being transferred, which is not revealed by the submission of the number of units. This can provide greater reassurance to a neighbour or signal a potentially destabilizing accumulation and thus increase transparency and build confidence. Experts noted that this could increase the reporting burden for some Member States. Some of the Member States that provide such information for categories I to VI do not provide such information for international transfers of missiles in category VII, noting that such information is regarded by these States as particularly sensitive.

Category I
Battle tanks

52. The Group did not consider any specific proposals to amend the description for category I.

Category II
Armoured combat vehicles

53. The Group re-examined the proposal considered by the 2019 Group to amend category II to include additional technical parameters within the armoured combat vehicles category. The Group considered two proposals for a new description for category II, reading as follows (proposed amendment in italicized text):

Category II
Armoured combat vehicles

Tracked, semi-tracked or wheeled self-propelled vehicles, with armoured protection and cross-country capability: (a) designed and equipped to transport a squad of four or more infantrymen, or (b) armed with an integral or organic weapon of at least 12.5 millimetres calibre or a missile launcher, or *(c) equipped for specialized reconnaissance, command and control of troops or electronic warfare, or (d) armoured recovery vehicles, tank transporters, amphibious and deep-water fording vehicles including armoured bridge-launching vehicles.*

Category II
Armoured combat vehicles

Tracked, semi-tracked or wheeled self-propelled vehicles, with armoured protection and cross-country capability either: (a) designed and equipped to transport a squad of four or more infantrymen or *to perform specialized reconnaissance or electronic warfare missions*, or (b) armed with an integral or organic weapon of at least 12.5 millimetres calibre or a missile launcher.

54. The Group considered those proposals in connection with the discussion on the inclusion of military equipment that provided force projection and force multiplier capabilities for national armed forces, as well as the potential reporting burden for including such items. Experts considered the merits of including the technical parameters covered by proposed subcategories (c) and (d). For the first proposal, experts queried whether all types of tank transporters should be included in submissions or armoured tank transporters only, given that Member States could use civilian trucks and rail for tank transportation and that experts did not regard the reporting of such items necessary. Some Member States already report on armoured bridge-launching vehicles, but it was noted that such items might not be common to all armed forces.

Category III

Large-calibre artillery systems

55. The Group did not consider any specific proposals to amend the description for category III.

Category IV

Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles

56. After reviewing the proposal contained in the 2019 Group's report (ibid., para. 56), the Group considered two proposals to amend the description of category IV (proposed amendment in italicized text):

Category IV

Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles

Includes fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aerial vehicles as defined below:

(a) Manned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction, *as well as fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft which are designed, equipped or modified to perform specialized missions for reconnaissance, suppression of air defence, command and control of troops, electronic warfare, refuelling, or airdrop;*

(b) Unmanned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction.

The terms "combat aircraft" and "unmanned combat aerial vehicles" do not include primary trainer aircraft, unless designed, equipped or modified as described above.

Category IV

Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles

Includes fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aerial vehicles as defined below:

(a) Manned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction, *as well as manned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft which are designed, equipped or modified to perform specialized missions for electronic warfare, suppression of air defence, reconnaissance, command and control of troops;*

(b) Unmanned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction;

The terms "combat aircraft" and "unmanned combat aerial vehicles" do not include primary trainer aircraft, unless designed, equipped or modified as described above.

57. The Group discussed the different missions covered by the proposed amendments to the description of category IV, focusing on the rationale for reporting to the Register on the international transfer of refuelling aircraft in the first proposal. Experts noted that aircraft that provided air-to-air refuelling could significantly

increase the range of combat aircraft, which allowed for the projection of air power and could increase insecurity in regions into which such capabilities were transferred. Experts considered the potential for building trust and confidence among Member States if such items were reported to the Register. Experts believed that the addition of such military equipment to the Register's scope would not increase the reporting burden for Member States owing to the low number of such items that are transferred.

Category V **Attack helicopters**

58. The Group reviewed the proposal contained in the 2019 Group's report (*ibid.*, para. 57) to amend both the heading and description of category V to "Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles".

59. The Group noted that the proposed amendment to category V to include a subcategory for rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles would use the same approach as for the subcategory for fixed-wing and variable geometry unmanned combat aerial vehicles in category IV, adopted in 2016. The Group emphasized that rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles should be reported to the Register. During the discussion on the proposal, experts noted the increasing use of rotary-wing unmanned aerial vehicles for agricultural and tourism purposes, as well as in the oil and gas industry. The Group recognized the way in which terrorist groups and organized criminal organizations had attached munitions to "quadcopters" for use in attacks. Experts noted the burden of reporting all rotary-wing unmanned aerial vehicles that could be adapted in such ways. Therefore, the Group considered whether specific reference should be made in the description to unmanned rotary-wing aircraft "specially designed for military operations" or whether the proposed description was already clear that Member States should not report rotary-wing unmanned aerial vehicles that were not equipped or modified to engage targets employing guided or unguided weapons with an integrated fire control and aiming system. The Group would like to ensure consistency in the approach to the descriptions for unmanned aircraft in categories IV and V.

60. The Group re-examined the proposal contained in the 2019 Group's report (*ibid.*, para. 58) to amend the description of category V to include the following (proposed amendment in italicized text):

Manned rotary-wing aircraft designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons, as well as manned rotary-wing aircraft which are designed, equipped or modified to perform specialized missions for reconnaissance, suppression of air defence, target acquisition, communications, command and control of troops, electronic warfare, mine-laying missions, or troop transport.

61. The Group considered the proposal in the context of the broader discussion on force projection and force multipliers.

Category VI **Warships**

62. The Group re-examined the proposal contained in the 2019 Group's report (*ibid.*, para. 59) to amend the description of category VI to lower the threshold for the minimum standard displacement of vessels or submarines from 500 to 150 metric tons, so that the description would read as follows (proposed amendment in italicized text):

VI. Warships

Vessels or submarines armed and equipped for military use with a standard displacement of *150 metric tons* or above, and those with a standard displacement of less than *150 metric tons*, equipped for launching missiles with a range of at least 25 kilometres or torpedoes with similar range.

63. Experts considered whether vessels with a standard displacement below 500 metric tons constituted a threat to a neighbouring country, given that their primary function is coastline patrol. The Group noted that vessels with a standard displacement below 500 metric tons were already included in the Register if equipped for launching missiles and torpedoes with a range of at least 25 kilometres. Experts discussed the merits of including a subcategory for unmanned vessels and submarines that could be lighter and have different characteristics to those contained in the current description. Lighter vessels and submarines being developed and due for entry into service around the time of the next scheduled Group of Governmental Experts in 2025 could be used in attacks on larger warships or used for attacking critical infrastructure, such as underwater cables.

Category VII

Missiles and missile launchers

64. The Group re-examined the proposal contained in the 2019 Group's report (*ibid.*, para. 60) to amend the description of category VII to remove the exemption for ground-to-air missiles:

VII. Missiles and missile launchers

(a) Guided or unguided rockets, ballistic or cruise missiles capable of delivering a warhead or weapon of destruction to a range of at least 25 kilometres, and means designed or modified specifically for launching such missiles or rockets, if not covered by categories I through VI. For the purpose of the Register, this subcategory includes remotely piloted vehicles with the characteristics for missiles as defined above;

(b) Man-portable air-defence systems.

65. The Group noted that surface-to-air missiles launched from a warship were included in the Register, but the same missiles, if launched from the ground, were excluded, with the exception of man-portable air-defence systems. In addition to the proposed amendment for including ground-to-air missiles, experts also considered lowering or removing the 25-kilometre threshold for reporting missiles. The discussion on those proposed amendments included an exchange of views on the terms "offensive" and "defensive" in relation to weapon systems and military doctrine.

2. Small arms and light weapons

66. The Group carefully considered the long-standing proposal to elevate reporting on the import and export of small arms and light weapons into a formal eighth category, taking into account a range of potential benefits and risks for the Register's relevance, participation and use. The Group reviewed the use of the existing seven-plus-one formula in those deliberations.

67. The issue of small arms and light weapons is a high priority for many in the international community. Previous Groups of Governmental Experts introduced and maintained the seven-plus-one formula to enhance the status of reporting on international transfers of small arms and light weapons. Member States can report

their international transfers of small arms and light weapons in parallel with the seven categories of the Register using the standardized form for reporting international transfers of small arms and light weapons. This format provides flexibility to Member States that have difficulty reporting on international transfers of small arms and light weapons. The Group discussed whether there was sufficient momentum to change the approach for reporting on the export and import of small arms and light weapons to upgrade the voluntary seven-plus-one formula into a full-scale eighth category.

68. Experts considered whether a formal eighth category for small arms and light weapons would strengthen the role of the Register as a means of assisting Member States in identifying and preventing the destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons. Such weapons play a central role in initiating, exacerbating and sustaining armed conflict, crime and terrorism and have a negative impact on sustainable development. The Secretary-General estimates that 27 per cent of civilian deaths in armed conflicts have been caused by small arms and light weapons and that more than half of all homicide victims in the world are killed with firearms (see [S/2021/839](#)). The Register's focus on its traditional seven categories means that it does not reflect the weapons that constitute the main security concern for many Member States. Therefore, the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as an eighth category could encourage the participation of Member States whose security is affected by the illicit and destabilizing international transfer of small arms and light weapons.

69. The Group noted that small arms and light weapons are included directly in the reporting provisions of multilateral conventional arms instruments created after the Register. Therefore, a formal eighth category would contribute to the harmonization for some Member States of global, regional and subregional reporting obligations and commitments. At the same time, experts are aware that some Member States may report incomplete information on international transfers of small arms and light weapons owing to technical difficulties in collecting and submitting information on the export and import of this type of conventional arm or to security concerns related to small arms and light weapons. From a trust- and confidence-building perspective, experts considered that it was preferable for the submissions of those Member States to contain incomplete information on the export and import of small arms and light weapons rather than having such Member States not participate in the Register. Experts assumed that Member States could improve their data collection and reporting practices over time, eventually submitting complete reports. Such Member States could use available international assistance and cooperation opportunities to build the capacity necessary to collect, compile and submit data on international transfers of small arms and light weapons to the Register, as well as to fulfil obligations under other instruments to report annually on the import and export of conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons.

70. The Group noted that many Member States were already accustomed to reporting on international transfers of small arms and light weapons to other instruments, including the legally binding Arms Trade Treaty and regional and subregional instruments. Furthermore, although the overall number of submissions to the Register is declining, the reporting rate on small arms and light weapons transfers under the seven-plus-one formula is almost equal to the reporting rate for the other seven categories of the Register for the period 2017–2020 (see figure I). Consequently, experts concluded that the transition from the seven-plus-one formula to a formal eighth category should be a simple administrative task. The only additional burden for Member States is that they would have more information to collect and compile for their annual submissions to the Register. Some Member States have already overcome this difficulty, given that States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty provide data on the import and export of small arms and light weapons as an

eighth category in their Arms Trade Treaty annual reports on conventional arms exports and imports. The Seventh Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty saw the endorsement of the use of a new reporting template for submitting Arms Trade Treaty annual reports on the export and import of conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, which includes the option for Arms Trade Treaty States parties to indicate that, as written in the annual reporting template, “The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) may use the relevant information in this Annual Report as a basis for the reporting State’s report to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA)”. In addition, deadlines for submitting reports to the Register and the Arms Trade Treaty are the same. Experts consider that enhanced cooperation between the secretariats of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Register could therefore assist in overcoming challenges for some Member States in providing data on the import and export of small arms and light weapons for a formal eighth category.

71. Experts considered whether the elevation of reporting on the international transfer of small arms and light weapons into a formal eighth category could lead to a decrease in participation, given that it might place additional constraints on the data collection and reporting capabilities of some Member States. The Group noted that the overall rate for reporting to the Register had been in decline for 20 years, correlating strongly with a reduction in the number of Member States that submitted “nil” returns for exports and imports of the seven categories of the Register (see figure V). Experts in previous Groups of Governmental Experts assumed that the inclusion of small arms and light weapons in the Register could help to stimulate more reporting from regions with low rates of reporting that are negatively affected by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The adoption of the seven-plus-one formula in 2016, for reporting on small arms and light weapons in parallel with the seven categories of the Register, has not reversed this decline. Experts considered whether some Member States might not participate in the Register if reporting on small arms and light weapons were “requested” owing to an additional administrative reporting burden. Furthermore, experts discussed the Register’s use on two occasions when determining the scope of arms embargoes established pursuant to Security Council resolutions in relation to its nature as a universal and non-discriminatory mechanism of transparency and confidence-building in the export and import of conventional armaments.

72. Taking these factors into account, the Group reconsidered the description for small arms and light weapons contained in the 2019 Group’s report (*ibid.*, para. 64), based on the definition of small arms and light weapons used in paragraph 4 of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, determining that it could be used by Member States that provide data to the Register on the import and export of small arms and light weapons.

3. Procurement through national production

73. The Group considered a proposal for Member States to be “called upon” or “further invited” to report on procurement through national production of the Register’s seven categories on the same basis as for reporting on the import and export of conventional arms. It was noted in the proposal that Member States could acquire conventional arms through import or from their national production facilities. The Register “requests” Member States to report on the import and export of conventional arms and “invites” them to provide additional background information on the procurement of conventional arms through national production. Therefore, experts highlighted that the Register could not fulfil its primary function of identifying and preventing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms when

it covered only one of the two main forms of acquisition. Furthermore, the Register could be considered to discriminate against the security interests of States that rely on arms imports by requiring them to be transparent regarding their acquisitions without similarly requiring States producing their arms indigenously to be transparent regarding such acquisitions. Experts noted that information on procurement plans and acquisitions, including through national production, was made available by government authorities in some Member States, as well as through open-source materials. However, for some Member States this type of information remains highly sensitive. The Group also noted that Member States could provide financial information on the procurement of conventional arms to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, although the categories and unit of measurement for this instrument are not the same as for the Register, and no distinction is made in the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures on imports versus procurement through national production. The Group noted that the proposal had been discussed by previous Groups of Governmental Experts.

74. The Group also considered a proposal to adopt a reference reporting form for Member States wishing to provide, on an annual basis, additional background information on the number of units procured through national production for each of the Register's seven categories. The reference reporting form also includes columns for Member States to provide, on a voluntary basis, a "description of the items" and any other "comments". Experts noted that the proposed reporting form would help to facilitate the reporting of such information by States wishing to do so and could lead to an increase in the number of submissions containing additional background information on procurement through national production. Experts recalled that some Member States that procured conventional arms through national production had national regulations in place that would prohibit the provision of such information to the Register. Currently, Member States provide this information using a variety of formats. Furthermore, the reference reporting form could be made available in the six official languages of the United Nations. The Group also discussed the possibility of including small arms and light weapons, either in the form of the seven-plus-one formula or as a formal eighth category, in such a reference reporting form.

4. Military holdings

75. The Group considered a proposal for States to be "called upon" or "further invited" to report on military holdings of the Register's seven categories on the same basis as for reporting on the import and export of conventional arms. Data on military holdings is important because it provides a baseline for an assessment to determine whether an excessive and destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms is taking place. Experts considered that the provision of such information would enhance the relevance of the Register and help to further contribute to trust- and confidence-building among Member States. The Group noted that more Member States provided additional background information on military holdings than procurement through national production. Notwithstanding the similarity of the two proposals for enhancing reporting on procurement through national production and military holdings, the Group emphasized the importance of considering the two types of additional background information separately, because some Member States regard information on military holdings as more sensitive than information on exports, imports and procurement through national production.

76. The Group considered a proposal to adopt a reference reporting form for Member States wishing to provide additional background information on military holdings on an annual basis for each of the Register's seven categories. The proposed reporting form contains the same columns as the proposed reporting form for procurement through national production. Expert views highlighted the benefits of

and challenges in adopting a reporting form on military holdings, echoing some of the points made in paragraphs 73 to 75 above. The Group also discussed the possibility of including small arms and light weapons, either in the form of the seven-plus-one formula or as a formal eighth category, in such a reporting form.

5. Relevant policies

77. The Group discussed the ability of Member States to provide additional background information on relevant policies, noting that few Member States utilize that option.

C. Access to reported data and information and use of the Register

1. Access to data and information contained in the Register

78. The Office for Disarmament Affairs presented its first-ever data strategy, covering the period 2021–2025, which includes provisions for the Register’s online database. The strategy is intended to enable greater awareness of and access to official data provided by Member States to better inform policy analysis and decision-making. The data and information provided to the Register will be made available through the Register’s online database and will also be available alongside data and information provided for other United Nations instruments (e.g., United Nations Report on Military Expenditures) in country profiles for each Member State. To date, extrabudgetary resources have been used to establish, maintain and upgrade the Register’s online reporting tool and database, which rely on external consultants. It is anticipated that the new data strategy can help the secretariat to overcome many of the previous challenges in maintaining and upgrading the Register’s online reporting tool and database. The Group welcomed the focus on enhancing the presentation of data and information contained in the Register and improvements for access. As with previous Groups of Governmental Experts, the Group emphasized the importance of ensuring that data and information submitted by Member States are made available in the online database as quickly as possible after they have been received by the secretariat, and of ensuring that data and information are made available in the six official languages of the United Nations.

79. The Group considered not only improving access to data and information in the Register, but also measures to increase awareness of the Register and its utility. The secretariat informed the Group that there had been 7,803 visits in 2021 to the Register’s online database, with 4,317 visits in the first five months of 2022. The Group discussed the different target audiences for the Register, ranging from government officials engaged in arms control and security affairs, through academic and think tank researchers to the general public. The Group explored different methods for engaging those target audiences, including the use of social media platforms alongside more well-established engagement approaches, as well as the benefits for the secretariat of developing an engagement strategy for Register awareness-raising and accessibility.

2. Role of the secretariat and linkages with other relevant instruments

80. Following presentations from the secretariats of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Organization of American States and OSCE, experts reflected on the way in which many Member States were obliged to provide annual reports on the export and import of conventional arms that are aligned closely with the Register’s scope for a range of other multilateral, regional and subregional instruments on conventional arms control and confidence-building. The Group noted that the scope of those different instruments was not identical to that of the Register. For example, Arms Trade Treaty

States parties are required to provide annual reports on the export and import of eight categories of conventional arms, but not procurement through national production nor military holdings. Therefore, the Register's secretariat should undertake any exploration of relevant reporting modalities and methods for the benefit of easing the reporting burden on Member States in a careful and considered manner.

81. Given the new Office for Disarmament Affairs data strategy, experts discussed with the secretariat the possibility for it to share data and information submitted by Member States with other international reporting instruments to limit duplicate reporting (i.e., for Arms Trade Treaty States parties to be able to submit data and information on the export and import of eight categories of conventional arms to the Register and have relevant data automatically transmitted to the Treaty's secretariat to fulfil Treaty reporting requirements). Experts noted that the current Arms Trade Treaty reporting template contained an option for States parties to indicate that data and information on the export and import of eight categories of conventional arms contained in a Treaty annual report on the export and import of conventional arms could also be submitted to the Register's secretariat. The Group emphasized the urgency for the secretariats of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Register to put in place practical measures to ensure that when Treaty States parties had selected the option for sharing their Treaty annual report with the Register's secretariat, those data and information were included in the Register. The Register's secretariat explained that it had been possible to align reporting on the Programme of Action on Small Arms with OSCE and that it would similarly explore ways to align the Arms Trade Treaty and Register templates to allow Member States to submit data to one secretariat and satisfy the obligation for a Treaty annual report and commitment for a Register submission.

82. Experts noted that international assistance programmes to build capacity for the implementation and universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty were available for use not only by Treaty States parties, but also all Member States that seek to become a State party. One of the areas available for assistance is reporting on the export and import of conventional arms. Experts underlined the benefits of ensuring that assistance to build capacity for Arms Trade Treaty reporting should highlight how Treaty annual reports could also be submitted to the Register, noting the different options for Register reporting and for providing additional background information.

3. Use of the Register

83. The Group underlined the positive influence of the Register on multilateral, regional and subregional conventional arms control and confidence-building instruments. Experts noted that the scope of the Register's seven categories was a point of reference for the scope of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisition, as well as for the information exchanges under OSCE Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies. The requirements for reporting on the export and import of conventional arms are aligned mainly with those of the Register, with reporting templates for these instruments containing many of the same elements as the standardized reporting form for the Register. At the same time, as noted above, experts highlighted that the scope of some of those other instruments was broader than that of the Register, with many including provisions for reporting on small arms and light weapons.

84. Experts noted that Member States used to engage more regularly in bilateral consultations in preparing submissions for the Register. Some Member States still consult with other Member States to which conventional arms have been exported or from which arms have been imported, but this does not appear to be as widespread as

indicated in reports of previous Groups of Governmental Experts. Member States use the data and information exchanged for other relevant instruments, as well as open-source data and information, in bilateral and regional consultations on conventional arms control and confidence-building. The Register remains an important source of information for such consultations because data and information are provided by Member States and made publicly available. Furthermore, experts shared examples of the Register being used in parliamentary debates and in national discussions on arms transfer policy and practice and for comparing the national practices of Member States on decisions on the export and import of conventional arms.

85. The Group examined the potential utility of the Register for preventing or identifying the diversion of conventional arms to the illicit arms trade. Owing to different reporting practices, the Group noted that discrepancies among Member State submissions appearing to report on the same transfer did not always reflect diversion cases and might, for example, reflect differences between numbers authorized for export and actual transfers. The Group discussed two ways in which the Register could help to inform diversion risk assessments undertaken when considering whether to authorize or deny an application to export conventional arms. First, the Register provides data that help Member States to understand international arms flow patterns and potential diversion risks, including potentially revealing the re-export of conventional arms that could be considered to constitute a diversion of conventional arms. Second, Member State participation in the Register could provide some degree of assurance that the Member State has control over its international arms transfers and indicate a lower risk of diversion than for a Member State that is not transparent. Experts highlighted that this approach was recommended in relevant multilateral, regional and subregional instruments and guidance documents. At the same time, experts noted that there were other United Nations instruments that focused primarily on addressing the illicit arms trade, in particular the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and that the Register was not designed for identifying diversion and addressing the illicit arms trade.

86. Experts explained that the procedures for collecting and collating data and information to be submitted to the Register had positive benefits for interdepartmental and interministerial cooperation and information-sharing at the national level. The Group exchanged information on their national procedures, highlighting the need for national points of contact to have the authority to request and receive data and information for Register submissions from various ministries, departments and agencies. In that regard, experts noted the utility of the guidance document on the importance of the points of contact in enhancing the value of the Register for Member States.³ Experts underlined the value of institutionalizing an annual national procedure for the collection and compilation of data on the export and import of conventional arms for all instruments to which the Member State provides such information.

87. The Group considered the potential utility of the Register not only for conventional arms control and confidence- and trust-building in military affairs, but also in connection with broader conflict prevention and sustainable development agendas. The Group welcomed the efforts of the Office for Disarmament Affairs to link the Register to the Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda, Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament and the forthcoming new Agenda for Peace, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group also underlined the importance of the Register for academic and policy researchers who analyse international arms flows, conventional arms control, international security and

³ Available at <https://s3.amazonaws.com/unoda-web/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Importance+of+the+national+points+of+contact+in+enhancing+the+value+of+UNROCA.pdf>.

conflict prevention, as well as how their work could be useful for the United Nations and Member States.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

88. The Group met on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the only global conventional arms transparency and confidence-building instrument. The Register was established in 1992 against a backdrop of international armed conflicts fuelled by the opaque acquisition of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms. Given subsequent changes in the international security environment, experts in previous Groups of Governmental Experts considered whether the Register was fit for supporting efforts to enhance international peace and security in the twenty-first century. The 2022 Group's review of the Register's operation and relevance, as well as discussions on its further development, took place against a backdrop of heightened international tension and mistrust, which underlined the continued relevance of the Register and highlighted once again the continuing need for transparency and confidence-building instruments in political and military affairs. The Group recalled the paramount importance of the guiding principles of the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

89. The Group reiterated the Register's flexibility for enabling Member State participation. There are three ways in which a Member State can participate in the Register:

(a) Providing data on the export and/or import of seven categories of major conventional arms that took place in the previous calendar year, using the online reporting tool or standardized form for reporting international transfers of conventional arms (see annexes III.A and III.B);

(b) Under the seven-plus-one formula, providing data on the import and/or export of the seven categories of major conventional arms and the international transfer of small arms and light weapons that took place in the previous calendar year, using the online reporting tool or standardized forms for reporting the international transfer of conventional arms and small arms and light weapons (see annexes III.A and III.B and IV.A and IV.B), for Member States that are in a position to do so;

(c) Providing a "nil" return declaring that the Member State has: (i) not exported and/or imported conventional arms contained in the seven categories of major conventional arms during the previous calendar year; or (ii) not exported and/or imported any conventional arms covered by the seven-plus-one formula during the previous calendar year. Member States can use the simplified "nil" reporting form for such purposes and indicate whether their return is a rolling "nil" return valid for up to a three-year period if they have no procurement plans (see annex V).

90. The Group expressed deep concern at the low level of participation in the Register during the period 2017–2020, noting the lowest level of participation occurred for 2020. The Group highlighted a range of factors that could have contributed to the situation, including limited capacities for collecting and compiling submissions, questions over the relevance of the Register for building confidence and trust in addressing the security concerns of all Member States, a decline in the perceived importance of the Register for Member States, compared with other commitments and obligations to report on international arms transfers, the capacity of the secretariat to facilitate reporting and the need to have the online reporting tool and online database available in the six official languages of the United Nations.

91. The Group noted the correlation between the low level of participation and the low level of “nil” returns in recent years. The Group recalled the recommendation of the 2016 Group to allow Member States to submit a rolling “nil” return, which would be valid for a maximum of three years (A/71/259, para. 89). The information provided by the secretariat indicated that that option had not been used widely. This situation could be linked to the fact that the recommendations of the 2000 Group to provide a form for reporting “nil” returns (A/55/281, para. 94 (f)) and the simplified “nil” reporting form attached to the report of the 2003 Group (A/58/274, para. 113 (g) and annex III) had not been amended to reflect the possibility for submitting a rolling “nil” return.

92. The Group emphasized the importance of tailoring measures to promote participation to specific regional and subregional circumstances that influence Member State participation in the Register. The Group echoed the calls of previous Groups of Governmental Experts to ensure that the online reporting tool and other relevant materials to promote and enable participation in the Register were translated into the six official languages of the United Nations. The Group compiled a comprehensive list of practical measures directed towards the secretariat and Member States to raise awareness of the Register and promote participation, building on recommendations of previous Groups of Governmental Experts. The Group introduced a new collaborative approach for the secretariat and Member States through an “informal group of friends” that would promote greater participation in the Register, develop outreach and training tools and support secretariat efforts to secure appropriate budgetary and human resources to implement its tasks.

93. The Group underscored that the secretariat needed adequate financial and human resources for the Register’s operation and for undertaking measures to facilitate and increase Register participation and use, as recommended by previous the Groups of Governmental Experts and the 2022 Group. The secretariat’s core tasks consist of ensuring that Member States know how and when to participate in the Register, maintaining and updating the Register’s online database with data and information provided by Member States, maintaining a database of national points of contact to facilitate their exchanges, ensuring regular communication with the secretariats of relevant international, regional and subregional instruments, and promoting participation in and use of the Register. The Group lamented the financial and human resource challenges that the secretariat faced in that regard and the impact that this had had on the secretariat’s ability to maintain regular and consistent communication with national points of contact to ensure the smooth functioning of the Register and high levels of participation.

94. The Group emphasized that participation in the Register was the responsibility of Member States. In that regard, the Group concluded that Member State participation in the Register benefitted from the existence of a clear national procedure for data collection and compilation for reporting to the Register, as well as the appointment and adequate resourcing of a national point of contact to ensure that collected data and information were provided to the secretariat. Member States are also responsible for providing contact details for the national points of contact to the secretariat, ensuring that any changes in contact details are transmitted in a timely manner. Furthermore, the Group recognized the potential role of Member States in improving the secretariat’s situation by requesting the Office for Disarmament Affairs to provide a regular budgetary line to enable the secretariat to fulfil its mandated tasks.

95. The Group articulated the links between the Register’s relevance, scope and participation, concluding that sufficient political will in Member States was necessary for ensuring that appropriate resources were made available to enable participation in the Register. One of the key factors for the Register’s relevance for Member States is that the scope of the Register assists the international community in identifying

excessive and destabilizing accumulations of conventional arms and provides for transparency and confidence-building among Member States to foster an environment conducive to international peace, security, stability and sustainable development.

96. The Group reviewed the proposals to amend the descriptions of Register categories as recommended the 2019 Group's report (A/74/211, para. 113), as well as proposals presented by experts in the 2022 Group, as outlined in paragraphs 50 to 65 above.

97. The Group noted the significance of force projection and force multiplier military equipment in considering whether arms build-ups were excessive and destabilizing. The Group therefore considered the impact on the nature of the Register of including military equipment in its scope that is considered force projection and force multiplier equipment rather than conventional arms that fire, launch or deliver ammunition or munitions. In considering proposals to amend the descriptions of categories II, IV and V to cover such military equipment, the Group also deliberated on the merits and complexity of creating a new category in the Register for force projection and force multiplier military equipment. The Group emphasized the importance of finding a balance to ensure that the Register captured military equipment that could increase insecurity, while not making the Register more complex or overly burdensome for reporting.

98. The Group recognized ongoing developments in the wider field of unmanned military systems, noting the potential that these had to change the conduct of war, and that they were not limited to items that would fall within categories IV and V. It noted that this was a topic that would merit further consideration by future Groups of Governmental Experts, bearing in mind technological and military developments.

99. The Group considered the two methods that the 2016 Group had recommended to explicitly include unmanned and remotely piloted systems in the Register: (a) encouraging Member States to report international transfers of rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles to category V and to utilize the "Comments" column to indicate such items; and (b) the amendment of the title of category IV and inclusion of a new description and subcategory for reporting international transfers of fixed-wing and variable geometry unmanned combat aerial vehicles. The Group considered those two approaches to constitute a potential two-step approach for amending Register category descriptions to create subcategories for reporting the international transfer of unmanned and remotely piloted weapon systems. First, when such systems are in development or a limited quantity of items is being tested, then Member States should be encouraged to report international transfers using current Register categories, but clearly indicate that the items being transferred are unmanned or remotely piloted or provide model and type information. Second, when such systems are considered in service or transferred in sufficient numbers, it could be possible for the Group to achieve consensus on an amendment to the relevant Register category, with a description for the unmanned and remotely piloted subcategory.

100. The Group recognized the flexible approach provided by the seven-plus-one formula for reporting on the import and export of small arms and light weapons, but also considered ways to further enhance that option. The Group continued to examine the proposal to transform the seven-plus-one formula into eight formal Register categories to include reporting the import and export of small arms and light weapons, taking into account different views on the benefits and risks for the Register's relevance and participation, as outlined in paragraphs 66 to 72 above.

101. The Group recognized the utility of the three types of additional background information that Member States could provide to the Register for fulfilling its objectives of building trust and increasing transparency to help to identify the destabilizing and excessive accumulation of conventional arms. At the same time, the

Group recognized that some Member States regarded information on procurement through national production and on military holdings as particularly sensitive and emphasized the need to discuss those different types of information separately. The Group noted that the architects of the Register anticipated the expansion of its scope to include the reporting of such information on the same level as for exports and imports of conventional arms.

102. The Group welcomed the adoption and implementation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs data strategy for the period 2021–2025, noting its potential benefits for overcoming many of the secretariat's challenges in maintaining and upgrading the Register's online reporting tool and database. The Group expressed its hope that the new approach could help the secretariat to implement the recommendations of previous Groups of Governmental Experts to ensure that data and information submitted by Member States were made available in the six official languages of the United Nations in the online database as quickly as possible after it had been received by the secretariat. The secretariat expressed its willingness to consider the development of an engagement strategy with different methods for raising awareness of the Register and its utility among various target audiences and users.

103. The Group stressed that the Register had had a positive influence on different international, regional and subregional conventional arms control and confidence-building instruments. The Group took note of the links between the scope and reporting modalities of the Register and other relevant instruments. The Group indicated ways in which the secretariat could engage with the secretariats of other conventional arms control and confidence-building instruments to minimize the reporting burden on Member States that had multiple commitments and obligations to report on the export and import of conventional arms. Of particular urgency is ensuring that the secretariat can receive Arms Trade Treaty annual reports on exports and imports if a State party has indicated that the report can be used for its Register submission. The Group also highlighted opportunities for Member States to use available international assistance programmes to build capacity to collect, compile and submit data and information on the export and import of conventional arms for the Register and other related international, regional and subregional instruments.

104. The Group concluded that participation in the Register had benefits and uses for Member States, the United Nations and other entities. While there have been advances in the quantity and quality of open-source materials on international arms transfers, acquisitions and military holdings, the importance of the Register remains because its data and information have been provided by Member States and made publicly available. In addition to its use as a confidence-building mechanism, the Group noted two ways in which the Register could be used for preventing or identifying risks for the diversion of conventional arms to the illicit arms trade: first, to better understand international arms flow patterns and identify re-exports that could constitute diversion; and, second, participation in the Register could be a positive signal to other Member States that the participating Member State has control over its international arms transfers and therefore has a more limited risk of diversion, compared with a Member State that does not participate.

B. Recommendations

105. Following the consideration of proposals for amendments to the Register categories, as outlined in the report of the 2019 Group and presented by experts in the 2022 Group, the Group recommends that the heading for category V be amended as shown below and that the following description be used in reporting to the Register (see annex II):

Category V**Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles**

Includes rotary-wing aircraft as defined below:

(a) Manned rotary-wing aircraft designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized reconnaissance or electronic warfare missions;

(b) Unmanned rotary-wing aircraft designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons.

106. The Group recommends that Member States, in a position to do so and using the seven-plus-one formula use the following description, based on the definition contained in the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (see annex II), in providing information on the export and import of small arms and light weapons, as appropriate, through the online reporting tool or the optional standardized form for reporting the international transfer of small arms and light weapons (see annex IV):

+1

Small arms and light weapons

Small arms and light weapons are any man-portable lethal weapons that expel or launch, are designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch, a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined in accordance with domestic law. In no case will antique small arms and light weapons include those manufactured after 1899.

(a) "Small arms" are, in a broad sense, weapons designed for individual use. They include, *inter alia*, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns;

(b) "Light weapons" are, generally, weapons intended for use by two or three people in a crew, although some may be carried and used by one person. They include, *inter alia*, heavy machine guns, handheld under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 75 mm.

107. To increase participation in the Register, the Group recommends that the secretariat include the simplified "nil" reporting form for seven categories and the simplified "nil" reporting form for the seven-plus-one formula (see annex V), which include provisions for rolling "nil" returns, when it circulates its annual request and reminder to Member States to participate in the Register and update the online reporting tool for the electronic filing of submissions to reflect the contents of the updated simplified "nil" reporting forms.

108. The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States in a position to do so to provide additional background information on procurement through national production to the Register. Member States providing

such additional background information should use the online reporting tool, namely, the reference reporting form on procurement through national production (see annex VI), or any other method that they deem appropriate.

109. The Group recommends that the Secretary-General continue to invite Member States in a position to do so to provide additional background information on military holdings to the Register. Member States providing such additional background information should use the online reporting tool, namely, the reference reporting form on military holdings (see annex VII) or any other method that they deem appropriate.

110. The Group recommends that the Secretary General continue to invite Member States in a position to do so to provide additional background information on relevant policies using any format that they deem appropriate.

111. The Group recommends that the secretariat not consider a Member State providing only additional background information as participating in the Register. A Member State has participated in the Register only if it submits data on international transfers of conventional arms, including “nil” returns.

112. The Group recommends that the next Group of Governmental Experts continue the review of the proposals for amendments to the existing Register categories contained in paragraphs 50 to 65 above. The deliberations of the next Group of Governmental Experts should consider the implications of any changes in increasing the relevance and level of participation in the Register, taking into account recent technological developments in conventional arms and the destabilizing potential of conventional arms not covered by the Register.

113. The Group recommends that the next Group of Governmental Experts continue to examine the relevance of the Register, as part of its mandate, by exploring the relationship between participation, scope and use.

114. The Group recommends that, when the next Group of Governmental Experts considers the continuing operation and potential expansion of the scope of the Register, it, among others, examine the following proposals:

(a) To clearly indicate that the descriptions of Register categories include unmanned and remotely piloted vehicles that fulfil the technical parameters outlined in the category description if the category description does not explicitly reference the inclusion of unmanned and remotely piloted vehicles, as outlined in paragraph 50 above and taking into account the 2019 Group’s report ([A/74/211](#), para. 103);

(b) For Member States to be “called upon” to provide model or type information on transfers of conventional arms in the seven categories of the Register in the column “Description of the Item” in the remarks section of the reporting form, as contained in paragraph 51 above;

(c) To upgrade the status of additional background information on procurement through national production to be on the same level as reporting on exports and imports to the Register, as outlined in paragraph 73 above;

(d) To upgrade the status of additional background information on military holdings to be on the same level as reporting on exports and imports to the Register, as outlined in paragraph 75 above.

115. The Group recommends that Member States:

(a) Provide the secretariat with details of their national points of contact, preferably through the online reporting tool. Updates to the contact details of the individuals and administrative divisions responsible that deal with the Register should be updated in a regular and timely manner;

(b) Report by the 31 May deadline in order to facilitate early compilation and dissemination of data and additional background information provided in the annual submissions of Member States;

(c) Encourage, as far as possible, the use of the online reporting tool for the electronic filing of reports;

(d) Continue to provide information to the secretariat on national reporting systems, including challenges that Member States face in reporting to the Register and their assistance needs, as well as views on the continuing operation and relevance of the Register and its further development;

(e) Consider, when applicable, the flexible approach that can be used for participation in the Register (i.e., the use of rolling “nil” returns and the seven-plus-one formula);

(f) Enhance coordination among relevant government agencies, ministries and departments to ensure that national procedures are in place for collecting and submitting data and additional background information to the Register, as well as to other relevant instruments, in a timely manner and on a regular basis. To aid this process, Member States can use the guidance provided by the 2016 Group on the importance of national points of contact;⁴

(g) Make use of available international assistance opportunities, where appropriate, to help to build national capacity to enable participation in the Register;

(h) Conduct targeted engagement, awareness-raising and capacity-building with key stakeholders in Member States that have shown political support for the Register or have stopped reporting to the Register;

(i) Conduct targeted engagement and awareness-raising through bilateral consultations and participation in multilateral instruments with Member States that are regular importers but do not participate in the Register. The Group recommends that major exporters of conventional arms that regularly report to the Register seize opportunities to promote participation in the Register. Other forms of peer-to-peer cooperation are encouraged;

(j) Use social media to raise awareness of the operation, scope and utility of the Register to promote greater participation and use. Member States could use relevant social media accounts to announce when they have submitted their Register return or highlight the information in the online database;

(k) Use the Register in relevant confidence-building measures;

(l) Consider sponsoring a Junior Professional Officer to support the secretariat in ensuring effective operation of the Register;

(m) Support the provision of a regular budgetary line for dedicated staff to support the secretariat’s ability to perform the tasks outlined in paragraph 116 below to ensure the continuing operation of the Register.

116. The Group recommends that the secretariat:

(a) Circulate to Member States at the beginning of each calendar year, under cover of a note verbale to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva and the national points of contact, the deadline for reporting to the Register, reporting forms, a clear description of the current status of the Register as described in paragraph 89 above and category descriptions, and guidance on using the online reporting tool for the electronic filing of submissions;

⁴ Available at www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/register.

(b) Circulate at the beginning of each calendar year, under cover of a note verbale to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva and the national points of contact, a reminder to Member States that have submitted a rolling “nil” return that indicates the number of remaining years on their rolling “nil” return;

(c) Send subsequent reminders to permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva and the national points of contact containing the information listed in paragraph 116 (a) and 116 (b) above in order to help to encourage submissions;

(d) Contact the permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva and the national points of contact, in particular the “regular reporters”, when the secretariat has not received a submission by 31 July to receive information concerning the status of their submission or to ensure that there have not been technical problems with the use of the online reporting tool;

(e) Provide confirmation to the permanent missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva and the national points of contact when a submission has been received, including a summary of data and additional background information contained in the submission. The secretariat is encouraged to request further clarification on the submission, as appropriate;

(f) On an annual basis, call upon Member States to provide information on their points of contact to the secretariat and an official email address and/or direct telephone number to facilitate communication;

(g) Use resources made available through the regular budget to translate the online reporting tool and the Register online database into the six official languages of the United Nations as a priority for the continuing operation of the Register;

(h) Ensure that data and additional background information provided by Member States are made available and accessible in a timely manner through the Register’s website;

(i) Establish a database of national points of contact for the Register, which will be located in the secure section of the online reporting tool and database;

(j) Organize events to promote the Register that are focused on the participation of national points of contact, to which permanent missions can also be invited. The events should promote the transparency and confidence-building nature of the Register and encourage national points of contact to advocate participation in the Register;

(k) Engage in targeted outreach to Member States, encouraging them to report to the Register. Such efforts should include Member States that have previously participated in the Register or that have shown their commitment to transparency through reporting to other instruments;

(l) Use social media to raise awareness of the operation, scope and utility of the Register in order to promote participation and use. The secretariat is encouraged to explore the creation of a distinct social media identity for the Register and use this to provide an alert or announcement every time a new submission has been received from a Member State and is made available in the online database, which includes possibilities for communication in the six official languages of the United Nations;

(m) Promote the establishment of an “informal group of friends” of the Register, consisting of interested members of the current Group, to work closely with the secretariat and Member States, and engage, as appropriate, with academia, NGOs and think tanks dedicated to analysing disarmament and arms control issues, to promote greater participation in the Register, notably by developing outreach and

training tools, as well as supporting the allocation of greater budgetary and human resources to the secretariat;

(n) Promote outreach to improve confidence-building and promote the Register, in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, as well as through workshops with interested Member States. Outreach initiatives should be focused on regions and subregions with low participation levels;

(o) Update and reissue the “Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms”, pursuant to the conclusions and recommendations of the 2022 Group;

(p) Encourage voluntary financial contributions to support (i) targeted training initiatives, online training modules or tutorials; (ii) regularly updating the “Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms” with the key recommendations of each Group of Governmental Experts; (iii) ensuring access through the Register’s website; and (iv) the provision of other relevant materials to assist Member States and their national points of contact in participating in the Register;

(q) Make information available to Member States on opportunities for capacity-building to participate in the Register, such as the possibility of working with NGOs and regional organizations, with support from dedicated funding instruments;

(r) Strengthen regular contact with the secretariats of relevant international instruments, including the Arms Trade Treaty, to enable the secretariat to engage in direct communication with Member States that have provided data on exports and imports of conventional arms to those relevant instruments but that have not participated in the Register. The secretariat should ask these Member States whether the data provided for other relevant instruments could be included in a submission to the Register;

(s) In cooperation with the secretariats of relevant international, regional and subregional instruments, where appropriate, examine ways to minimize the reporting burden for Member States and increase participation in the Register. Specifically concerning the Arms Trade Treaty secretariat, as deemed appropriate, the Register secretariat could pursue the operationalization of the tick box option provided in the Arms Trade Treaty annual reporting template that allows the Register secretariat to use data provided in a State party’s Treaty annual report for their Register submission;

(t) Continue to engage academia, NGOs and think tanks dedicated to analysing disarmament and arms control issues, pursuing partnerships to promote participation in and use of the Register;

(u) Consider conducting outreach activities to promote the Register that target parliamentarians in interested Member States, including through interparliamentarian organizations.

117. The Group recommends that the next Group of Governmental Experts review the impact of the implementation of the measures described in paragraphs 115 and 116 above to promote participation in the Register.

118. Taking into account the concerns expressed in paragraph 93 above, the Group recommends that the next General Assembly resolution on transparency in armaments include an explicit request that sufficient resources be made available by the United Nations to enable the secretariat to implement its core tasks, for the effective operation of the Register, including as outlined in paragraph 116 above.

119. In order to facilitate universal participation and the continued relevance and development of the Register, the Group recommends the convening of a Group of Governmental Experts in 2025 to review the operation and relevance of the Register and consider its further development. The Group should consist of approximately 20 experts representing the diverse perspectives on transparency in armaments of Member States on the basis of equitable geographical and gender representation.

120. The Group recommends that future reviews of the continuing operation, relevance and further development of the Register consider the conclusions and recommendations of the present report, as well as those contained in the reports of previous Groups of Governmental Experts.

Annex I

List of members of the 2022 Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms

Belgium

Lieutenant Colonel Dirk Audenaert
Chief Operations
Benelux Arms Control Agency

Tom Nijs
Legal Adviser
Strategic Goods Control Unit
Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office

Brazil

Érika Helena Campos
Adviser
Disarmament and Sensitive Technologies Division
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

China

Guotao Liang
Director
Department of Arms Control
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Fan Ting
Attaché
Department of Arms Control
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Victoria Lieta Liolocha
First Counsellor
Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
to the United Nations (New York)

France

Nicolas Roy
Adviser
Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy
Ministry for the Armed Forces

Lieutenant Colonel Emmanuel Senoussi
Expert in the export of war material
Directorate General for International Relations and Strategy
Ministry for the Armed Forces

Germany

Simon Hentrei
Legal Officer
Control of War Weapons, Export Control Special Procedures Division
Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action

Major Laurentius Wedeniwski
Assistant Section Chief, Arms Control
German Armed Forces Verification Centre

India

Muanpuii Saiawi (Chair)
Joint Secretary
New Emerging and Strategic Technologies and Cyber Diplomacy
Ministry of External Affairs

Jamaica

Dierdre Mills
Director
Bilateral Relations Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

Japan

Miyake Yasujiro
Director for Defence Cooperation and Exchanges
International Policy Division, Defence Policy Bureau
Ministry of Defence

Mexico

Wilma Laura Gandoy Vazquez
Director of Litigation III
Legal Adviser's Office
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Montenegro

Marija Jovović
Second Secretary
Directorate for the United Nations
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Netherlands

Frank de Boer
Arms Control Policy Adviser
Directorate International Military Cooperation
Ministry of Defence

Poland

Marta Przewoźniak
Counsellor
Security Policy Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Russian Federation

Vladislav Antonyuk
Deputy Director
Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Aleksei Chumichev
Expert
Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Evgenii Minaev
Expert
Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation

Vitaliy Sukhanov
First Secretary
Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations (Geneva)

Pavel Didkovskii
First Secretary
Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations (Geneva)

Senegal

Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Gaye
First Counsellor
Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations (New York)

Singapore

Seow Peng Yeo
Director for ASEAN and International Affairs
Defence Policy Office
Ministry of Defence

Ang Jo Yeu Joel
Policy Officer
Defence Policy Office
Ministry of Defence

Togo

Colonel Koffi Akpamoura
Director of Defence and Security Affairs
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Tunisia

Senior Colonel Kamel Rejeb^a
Deputy of General Director of Ammunitions and Armament
General Directorate of Ammunitions and Armament
Ministry of National Defence

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

David Ievins
Head of Multilateral and Humanitarian Arms Control
Counter Proliferation and Arms Control Centre
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

^a Although the Tunisian expert was nominated, he could not participate in any of the three sessions.

United States of America

William B. Malzahn
Senior Policy Adviser
Bureau of International Security and Non-Proliferation
Department of State

Simon Davidson-Hood
Senior Foreign Affairs Officer
Office of the Under Secretary of Defence for Policy
Department of Defense

Annex II

Categories of equipment and their descriptions

Category I

Battle tanks

Tracked or wheeled self-propelled armoured fighting vehicles with high cross-country mobility and a high-level of self-protection, weighing at least 16.5 metric tons unladen weight, with a high muzzle velocity direct fire main gun of at least 75 millimetres calibre.

Category II

Armoured combat vehicles

Tracked, semi-tracked or wheeled self-propelled vehicles, with armoured protection and cross-country capability, either: (a) designed and equipped to transport a squad of four or more infantrymen; or (b) armed with an integral or organic weapon of at least 12.5 millimetres calibre or a missile launcher.

Category III

Large-calibre artillery systems

Guns, howitzers, artillery pieces, combining the characteristics of a gun or a howitzer, mortars or multiple-launch rocket systems, capable of engaging surface targets by delivering primarily indirect fire, with a calibre of 75 millimetres and above.

Category IV

Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles

Includes fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aerial vehicles as defined below:

(a) Manned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized electronic warfare, suppression of air defence or reconnaissance missions;

(b) Unmanned fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft, designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons or other weapons of destruction;

The terms “combat aircraft” and “unmanned combat aerial vehicles” do not include primary trainer aircraft, unless designed, equipped or modified as described above.

Category V

Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles

Includes rotary-wing aircraft as defined below:

(a) Manned rotary wing aircraft designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons, including versions of these aircraft which perform specialized reconnaissance or electronic warfare missions.

(b) Unmanned rotary wing aircraft designed, equipped or modified to engage targets by employing guided or unguided anti-armour, air-to-surface, air-to-subsurface, or air-to-air weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons.

Category VI

Warships

Vessels or submarines armed and equipped for military use with a standard displacement of 500 metric tons or above, and those with a standard displacement of less than 500 metric tons, equipped for launching missiles with a range of at least 25 kilometres or torpedoes with similar range.

Category VII

Missiles and missile launchers

(a) Guided or unguided rockets, ballistic or cruise missiles capable of delivering a warhead or weapon of destruction to a range of at least 25 kilometres, and means designed or modified specifically for launching such missiles or rockets, if not covered by categories I through VI. For the purpose of the Register, this subcategory includes remotely piloted vehicles with the characteristics for missiles as defined above but does not include ground-to-air missiles;

(b) Man-portable air-defence systems.

+1

Small arms and light weapons^a

Small arms and light weapons are any man-portable lethal weapons that expel or launch, are designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch, a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined in accordance with domestic law. In no case will antique small arms and light weapons include those manufactured after 1899.

(a) “Small arms” are, in a broad sense, weapons designed for individual use. They include revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns.

(b) “Light weapons” are, generally, weapons intended for use by two or three people in a crew, although some may be carried and used by one person. They include, inter alia, heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 75 mm.

^a This description is based on the definition contained in paragraph 4 of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Annex III

A. Standardized form for reporting international transfers of conventional arms: exports

Exports^a

Report of international conventional arms transfers
(according to General Assembly resolutions 46/36 L and 58/54)

Reporting country: _____

National point of contact: _____
(Organization, Division/Section, telephone, fax, email) (FOR GOVERNMENTAL USE ONLY)

Calendar year: _____

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D^b</i>	<i>E^b</i>	<i>Remarks^c</i>	
<i>Category (I–VII)</i>	<i>Final importer State(s)</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>State of origin (if not exporter)</i>	<i>Intermediate location (if any)</i>	<i>Description of item</i>	<i>Comments on the transfer</i>
I. Battle tanks						
II. Armoured combat vehicles						
III. Large-calibre artillery systems						
IV. Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles (a) Combat aircraft (b) Unmanned combat aerial vehicles						
V. Attack helicopters (a) Attack helicopters (b) Rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles						
VI. Warships						
VII. Missiles and missile launchers ^d (a) Missiles and missile launchers (b) Man-portable air-defence system						

National criteria on transfers:

^{a, b, c, d} See explanatory notes.

The nature of information provided should be indicated in accordance with explanatory notes e and f.

B. Standardized form for reporting international transfers of conventional arms: imports

Imports^a

Report of international conventional arms transfers
(according to General Assembly resolutions 46/36 L and 58/54)

Reporting country: _____

National point of contact: _____
(Organization, Division/Section, telephone, fax, email) (FOR GOVERNMENTAL USE ONLY)

Calendar year: _____

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D^b</i>	<i>E^b</i>	<i>Remarks^c</i>	
<i>Category (I–VII)</i>	<i>Exporter State(s)</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>State of origin (if not exporter)</i>	<i>Intermediate location (if any)</i>	<i>Description of item</i>	<i>Comments on the transfer</i>
I. Battle tanks						
II. Armoured combat vehicles						
III. Large-calibre artillery systems						
IV. Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles (a) Combat aircraft (b) Unmanned combat aerial vehicles						
V. Attack helicopters (a) Attack helicopters (b) Rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles						
VI. Warships						
VII. Missiles and missile launchers ^d (a) Missiles and missile launchers (b) Man-portable air-defence system						

National criteria on transfers:

^{a, b, c, d} See explanatory notes.

The nature of information provided should be indicated in accordance with explanatory notes e and f.

Explanatory notes

- (a) Member States that do not have anything to report should file a “nil report” clearly stating that no exports or imports have taken place in any of the categories during the reporting period.
- (b) International arms transfers involve, in addition to the physical movement of equipment into or from national territory, the transfer of title to and control over the equipment. Member States are invited to provide with their return a concise explanation of national criteria used to determine when an arms transfer becomes effective. (See paragraph 42 of the annex to document [A/49/316](#).)
- (c) In the “Remarks” column, Member States may wish to describe the item transferred by entering the designation, type, model or any other information considered relevant. Member States may also wish to use the “Remarks” column to explain or clarify aspects relevant to the transfer.
- (d) Multiple-launch rocket systems are covered by the definition of category III. Rockets qualifying for registration are covered under category VII. MANPADS should be reported if the MANPAD system is supplied as a complete unit, i.e., the missile and launcher/grip stock form an integral unit. In addition, individual launching mechanisms or grip stocks should also be reported. Individual missiles, not supplied with a launching mechanism or grip stock, need not be reported.
- (e) Check any of the following provided as part of your submission:

	<i>Check</i>
(i) Standardized form for reporting exports of conventional arms	_____
(ii) Standardized form for reporting imports of conventional arms	_____
(iii) Optional standardized form for reporting exports of small arms and light weapons	_____
(iv) Optional standardized form for reporting imports of small arms and light weapons	_____
(v) Additional background information on military holdings	_____
(vi) Additional background information on procurement through national production	_____
(vii) Additional background information on relevant policies and/or national legislation	_____
(viii) Other (please describe)	_____

- (f) When reporting transfers, which of the following criteria, drawn from paragraph 42 of the annex to document [A/49/316](#), were used:

	<i>Check</i>
(i) Departure of equipment from the exporter's territory	_____
(ii) Arrival of equipment in the importer's territory	_____
(iii) Transfer of title	_____
(iv) Transfer of control	_____
(v) Other (please provide brief description below)	_____

Annex IV

A. Optional standardized form for reporting international transfers of small arms and light weapons: exports^{a,b,c}

Exports

Reporting country: _____

National point of contact: _____

(Organization, Division/Section, telephone, fax, e-mail) (FOR GOVERNMENTAL USE ONLY)

Calendar year: _____

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	
	<i>Final importer State(s)</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>State of origin (if not exporter)</i>	<i>Intermediate location (if any)</i>	<i>Description of item</i>	<i>Comments on the transfer</i>
SMALL ARMS						
1. Revolvers and self-loading pistols						
2. Rifles and carbines						
3. Sub-machine guns						
4. Assault rifles						
5. Light machine guns						
6. Others						
LIGHT WEAPONS						
1. Heavy machine guns						
2. Hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers						
3. Portable anti-tank guns						
4. Recoilless rifles						
5. Portable anti-tank missile launchers and rocket systems						
6. Mortars of calibres less than 75 mm						
7. Others						

National criteria on transfers:

^a The standardized forms provide options for reporting only aggregate quantities under the generic categories of “Small arms” and “Light weapons” and/or under their respective subcategories in accordance with the description provided in paragraph 106 of the present report. See the “Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms” for questions and answers regarding the reporting of small arms and light weapons.

^b The categories provided in the reporting form do not constitute a definition of “Small arms” and “Light weapons”.

^c This form is intended for use for providing information on international transfers of small arms and light weapons in accordance with the recommendations contained in paragraph 106 of the present report.

B. Optional standardized form for reporting international transfers of small arms and light weapons: imports^{a,b,c}

Imports

Reporting country: _____

National point of contact: _____

(Organization, Division/Section, telephone, fax, e-mail) (FOR GOVERNMENTAL USE ONLY)

Calendar year: _____

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	
	<i>Final exporter State(s)</i>	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>State of origin (if not exporter)</i>	<i>Intermediate location (if any)</i>	<i>Description of item</i>	<i>Comments on the transfer</i>
SMALL ARMS						
1. Revolvers and self-loading pistols						
2. Rifles and carbines						
3. Sub-machine guns						
4. Assault rifles						
5. Light machine guns						
6. Others						
LIGHT WEAPONS						
1. Heavy machine guns						
2. Hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers						
3. Portable anti-tank guns						
4. Recoilless rifles						
5. Portable anti-tank missile launchers and rocket systems						
6. Mortars of calibres less than 75 mm						
7. Others						

National criteria on transfers:

^a The standardized forms provide options for reporting only aggregate quantities under the generic categories of “Small arms” and “Light weapons” and/or under their respective subcategories in accordance with the description provided in paragraph 106 of the present report. See the “Guidelines for Reporting International Transfers to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms” for questions and answers regarding the reporting of small arms and light weapons.

^b The categories provided in the reporting form do not constitute a definition of “Small arms” and “Light weapons”.

^c This form is intended for use for providing information on international transfers of small arms and light weapons in accordance with the recommendation contained in paragraph 106 of the present report.

Annex V

A. Simplified “nil” reporting form for seven categories

“NIL” report

The Government of _____ confirms that it has neither exported nor imported any equipment in the seven categories of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms during the calendar year _____, and therefore submits a “nil” return.

Optional rolling “nil” return:

If a Member State wishes this “nil” return to be valid for more than one year, this rolling “nil” return shall be valid for a total of:

Check (*Please select only one option*)

2 years _____

3 years _____

unless otherwise communicated to the Register secretariat.

National point of contact
(FOR GOVERNMENTAL USE ONLY):

(Organization, Division/Section,

Telephone, Fax, E-mail)

B. Simplified “nil” reporting form for the “seven-plus-one formula”**“NIL” report**

The Government of _____ confirms that it has neither exported nor imported any equipment in the seven categories of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, nor small arms and light weapons, during the calendar year _____, and therefore submits a “nil” return.

Optional rolling “nil” return:

If a Member State wishes this “nil” return to be valid for more than one year, this rolling “nil” return shall be valid for a total of:

Check (*Please select only one option*)

2 years _____

3 years _____

unless otherwise communicated to the Register secretariat.

National point of contact
(FOR GOVERNMENTAL USE ONLY):

(Organization, Division/Section,

Telephone, Fax, E-mail)

Annex VI**Reference reporting form for information on procurement through national production**

<i>Category (I-VII)</i>	<i>Procurement through national production</i>		
	<i>Number of items</i>	<i>Remarks</i>	
		<i>Description of items</i>	<i>Comments</i>
I. Battle tanks			
II. Armoured combat vehicles			
III. Large-calibre artillery systems			
IV. Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
(a) Combat aircraft			
(b) Unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
V. Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
(a) Attack helicopters			
(b) Rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
VI. Warships			
VII. Missiles and missile launchers			
(a) Missiles and missile launchers			
(b) MANPADS			

Annex VII

Reference reporting form for information on military holdings

Category (I-VII)	Military holdings		
	Number of items	Remarks	
		Description of items	Comments
I. Battle tanks			
II. Armoured combat vehicles			
III. Large-calibre artillery systems			
IV. Combat aircraft and unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
(a) Combat aircraft			
(b) Unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
V. Attack helicopters and rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
(a) Attack helicopters			
(b) Rotary-wing unmanned combat aerial vehicles			
VI. Warships			
VII. Missiles and missile launchers			
(a) Missiles and missile launchers			
(b) MANPADS			