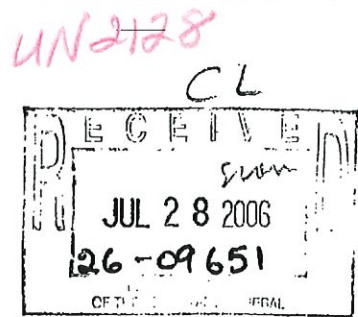


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Note to the Secretary-General

**SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THE
UN REGISTER OF CONVENTIONAL ARMS**

The 2006 Group of Governmental Experts appointed by you to review the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms under General Assembly resolution 60/226 completed its work today, with agreement on a number of issues related to the operation and further development of the Register.

Most notably, the Group's report reflects an agreement that would pave the way for China to resume its participation in the Register, which it had suspended in 1998 following the reporting of arms sales to Taiwan by the United States. In the report, the Experts agreed that only transfers involving UN Member States are to be reported to the Register.

This development means that the only major producer, exporter and importer of conventional weapons, as well as the only Permanent Member of the Council, which hitherto remained outside the Register, would soon re-join the Register, thereby giving a major boost to the Register's universality and confidence-building role.


Another significant development is the agreement on a standardized form for reporting international transfers of small arms and light weapons (SALW) to the Register on an optional basis. The Group also upgraded the status of reporting on SALW transfers by agreeing to incorporate such data and information in your annual consolidated report to the General Assembly on the UN Register. The progress achieved on SALW transfers would attract wide attention in the international community, particularly in those regions where SALW-related issues are paramount. Most importantly this is a significant and swift progress marked right after the deadlock by the "Small Arms Review Conference" this month.

The Group has been highly appreciative of the role of the Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) in promoting and facilitating the progress of the Register and has recommended to Member States to strengthen DDA's resources devoted to its work on the Register, in particular, and arms transparency, in general.

At a time when multilateral diplomacy in the disarmament field is beset with difficulties in many areas, the progress achieved by the 2006 Group is a most welcome development. In particular, the Group's report, once adopted by the General Assembly, will inject momentum for more progress in the area of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons.

The Group's chairman, Ambassador Roberto Garcia Moritan, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, played a critical role in guiding the Group to a successful conclusion. Besides Argentina, Brazil, China, France, Japan, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States were represented in the Group.

DDA will do its utmost to facilitate the continued progress of the UN Register as a global transparency and confidence-building instrument.



Nobuaki Tanaka
28 July 2006