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US CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER POLICY

BY

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Richard H. Langhorst, LTC, USA
TITLE: US CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER POLICY
FORMAT: Strategy Research Project
DATE: 15 April 1996 **PAGES:** 32 **CLASSIFICATION:** Unclassified

Millions of people around the world have been killed by conventional arms since the end of World War II. If increasing access to conventional arms is partly responsible for political and military aggression in post-Cold War Europe, what should be the United States' response? This study explores the new US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy of February 1995 in terms of ends, ways and means and its linkages to US National Security and National Military Strategies. Analysis focuses mainly on post-Cold War Europe, providing examples of multilateral arms control successes and recommendations for US policy implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Europe is far more dangerous now than at any time in the past 40 years....The end of the cold war... has unleashed a level of brutality and bloodshed which Europeans had long believed might be reached in the most benighted parts of the Third World, but never again on their own more civilized continent. The explosion of ethnic and regional tensions in the former Yugoslavia is spreading throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)--where there are large quantities of conventional weapons.¹

While nuclear nonproliferation regimes have largely dominated US arms control policy initiatives, "...more than 23 million people have been killed by conventional arms since the end of World War II."² If increasing access to conventional arms is partly responsible for political instability and military aggression in post-Cold War Europe, what should be the United States' response?

This paper will assess the current US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy. The framework for analysis will be in accordance with the US Army War College, Department of National Security and Strategy, strategic thought model (ends-ways-means). Specifically, the goals of the US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy will be examined in terms of objectives (ends) and the ways and means available to achieve them. Analysis will focus primarily on post-Cold War Europe, including arms transfer policy recommendations that might improve the latest US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy. Additionally, continuity or discontinuity between the National Security and National Military Strategies, as well as risks associated with policy implementation, will be addressed throughout the paper.³

BACKGROUND

Before exploring the current US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, let us briefly examine the underpinnings of US arms transfers. Conventional arms transfers have long been a key element of US National Security Strategy. Since the early 1930s, the United States has aggressively controlled the export of military arms and materials.⁴ The Mutual Defense Act of 1949 laid the foundation for security assistance, in terms of conventional arms transfers, to those nations that would complement the US policy of containment.⁵

Ever since Richard Nixon outlined a new national security doctrine in 1969 that emphasized sending arms instead of troops to defend US interests, executive branch policy-makers have taken it as an article of faith that US arms transfers are a virtually risk-free way to win friends.⁶

Although Presidential Administrations have supported arms transfers to varying degrees, the official US arms transfer policy remained largely unchanged through 1990--with the exception of increased congressional oversight provided through the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act of 1976.

Most recently, an ebb and flow of congressional interest corresponded directly to events in the Middle East and the massive US conventional arms transfers to that region.⁷ Likewise, regional conflicts and events resulting from the end of the Cold War have renewed national interest in arms transfer policy.

US government data compiled by the World Policy Institute at the New School for Social Research in New York indicate that from

1985 through 1994, \$42 billion dollars worth of US conventional arms were directly involved in over 45 regional conflicts. Furthermore, 90 percent of the belligerents engaged in significant ethnic or territorial conflicts during 1993-1994 received US arms or military technology as they prepared for war. Surprisingly, and contrary to public perception that the US prohibits delivery of weapons once a conflict has begun, as of late 1994 the US was providing military hardware and services to more than 50 percent of those countries involved in external or internal conflicts.⁸

Clearly, the world community cannot expect to reduce the level of global violence as long as potential belligerents can arm themselves with ease. While restricting the flow of arms will not eliminate the root causes of violence, it will be impossible to address underlying problem areas while arms fuel the fire of war.⁹

As early as the late 1950s, President Eisenhower became increasingly alarmed at the high rate of US spending required to arm and defend other nations. Western Europe was rebuilt largely with US dollars committed to a strong military-political alliance based on nuclear and conventional arms levels and capabilities. Eisenhower believed a rapidly expanding military-industrial complex, focused solely on equipping a huge military, might threaten social, economic and political stability.

What Eisenhower may not have envisioned as clearly, however, was the extent to which the US global military-industrial complex

would influence future regional conflicts. Although the Carter and Bush Administrations vainly attempted to limit the flow of arms trade, each fell victim to international and domestic competition for profits and political influence.¹⁰

As the sole superpower and major conventional arms supplier, the United States has another opportunity to lead the world in reducing conventional arms transfers that fuel regional conflicts. If the US is to assume this leadership role, official arms transfer policy goals must be credible, achievable and linked to the overall national security and military strategy.

On 17 February 1995, the United States released its first formal Conventional Arms Transfer Policy (Presidential Decision Directive-34) since the Reagan Administration document of 8 July 1981.¹¹ Although little critical analysis has emerged to date, President Clinton formalized his Administration's support for continued US arms sales as a critical element of United States foreign policy.¹²

While initial reactions to PDD-34 may appear discouraging to those who expected the Administration to limit arms transfers significantly, a broader analysis reveals a well-coordinated policy that adeptly provides linkages to both National Security and National Military Strategy objectives.

US POLICY ENDS (OBJECTIVES)

The Administration's new US Conventional Arms Transfers Policy goals (ends) are:

1. To ensure that our military forces can continue to enjoy technological advantages over potential adversaries.
2. To help allies and friends deter or defend themselves against aggression, while promoting interoperability with US forces when combined operations are required.
3. To promote regional stability in areas critical to US interests, while preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their missile delivery systems.
4. To promote peaceful conflict resolution and arms control, human rights, democratization, and other US foreign policy objectives.
5. To enhance the ability of the US defense industrial base to meet US defense requirements and maintain long-term military technological superiority at lower costs.¹³

Although broad in scope, the clear pronouncement of these goals is essential in light of the mounting evidence that previous US conventional arms transfers have actually fueled recent conflict.

Perhaps in an effort to avoid continued failures and to provide visibility to policy ends, this Administration purposefully coordinated the wide-ranging goals of the new US Arms Transfer Policy with each major policy aim of the National Security Strategy. The Administration included arms transfer goals as an integral part of A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement objectives to enhance US security, promote prosperity at home and to promote democracy abroad.¹⁴ The goals of the current arms transfer policy are equally reflective of the National Military Strategy objectives to promote stability and thwart aggression through strength and

by working with allies and friends.¹⁵ The ends of the US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy actually become a part of larger US national security and military goals of nonproliferation and defense-industrial base viability.

After close examination of these new arms transfer policy goals, one could conclude that enhancing US security is the overarching objective of arms transfers. Fundamentally, US security is enhanced as long as the US military maintains dominance and technological advantage. Military dominance and technological advantage are inextricably linked to arms transfer policy. Arms transfers must not interfere with regional balances of power or provide technology to potential aggressors.

While the ends of the arms transfer policy were crafted to ensure US military strength, they were equally balanced by national policy goals to reduce regional conflict and human rights violations. At the same time, this policy does not abandon friends and allies, but supports arms transfers that meet legitimate defense needs. This balance is crucial. If current arms transfer policy goals are realized, the US will enhance its security through classic military means as it bolsters relations with regional allies, improves military inter-operability and re-structures armed-force levels needed for a post-Cold War world.¹⁶

Arms transfer policy goals will also contribute to promoting prosperity at home. Downsizing of the US national defense establishment will create greater opportunities for more vital, non-defense industries that engage in global trade.¹⁷ A smaller

arms market is a reality of the post-Cold War environment that the defense industry has not fully accepted. Although the current arms transfer policy is sensitive to the viability of the US defense-industrial base, according to a senior Department of the Treasury official, US economic and security decisions will not be based on short-term commercial interests.¹⁸ Clinton Administration arms transfer decisions may not be driven strictly by commercial considerations, but a strong American defense-industrial base is a critical national security concern.¹⁹ This dichotomy is further exacerbated by competition for fewer dollars world-wide. In the global market place, conventional arms transfers have fallen from a 1981 level of \$67 billion a year to less than \$8 billion in 1995 (constant 1991 dollars).²⁰ Although the United States' market share has steadily increased, in the broader sense, US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy goals are grounded in efforts to reduce conventional weapons and related technology transfers to those countries and regions that might become future aggressors.²¹ Keeping this basic premise in the forefront of transfer decisions, the US promotes political stability and regional growth patterns receptive to expanding non-defense trade. In the long-term, defense-industry mergers and consolidation should maintain critical defense production capability. However, the sensitivity of the defense-industrial base and its reaction to US arms transfer objectives critically influence US policy concepts.

The new conventional arms transfer policy also supports the national strategic policy objective of promoting democracy abroad. The risks of political instability, adverse economic impact, or social discord are carefully investigated before the transfer of arms. All arms transfers will be consistent with current international agreements and arms control regimes, each done on a case-by-case basis to ensure an environment for democratic growth and expansion is sustained.

This new US Conventional Arms Transfer policy legitimately encourages restraint in destabilizing arms sales.²² US efforts to enhance security, promote prosperity and promote democracy abroad through open markets and increased visibility in trade, will not be undermined by this arms transfer policy.

Obvious linkages between national and military strategy ensure policy and political consistency, while providing a synergistic resolve to pursue manageable, independent goals.

US POLICY WAYS (CONCEPTS)

While the new US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy is expertly crafted and linked to National Security and National Military Strategies, what ways (concepts) are available to pursue current conventional arms transfer policy goals (ends)?

To ensure a measure of success, ways must be directly linked to each arms transfer policy goal without impeding major National Security or Military Strategy objectives. To complicate matters, arms sales often transcend national policies, achieving a status

and prestige of their own. More importantly, arms sales are increasingly being viewed as a source of economic security.²³

From the US point of view, ways to achieve these arms transfer goals range from unilateral self-restraint to multilateral control regimes. Although multilateral restraint may be the ideal, within the context of a post-Cold War environment, arms transfer controls must begin at home. Since the end of the Cold War, the leading suppliers of conventional arms have been Western industrial nations.²⁴ In fact, the end of the Cold War has heightened competition among producers and exporters to maintain a profitable customer base. Current estimates peg US arms trade market share at 70 percent, with Russia and Germany ranking second and third, respectively.²⁵

The arms transfer market has become a buyers' market. Given this high-level of global competition, US unilateral self-restraint is a contentious concept. Global downturns in defense spending are compelling traditional international conventional arms suppliers to curb their country's rapidly falling domestic defense industrial base with increased weapons exports.²⁶ Many would argue that unilateral self-restraint merely eliminates a needed market for US defense firms, while other global suppliers are seldom encouraged to follow suit.²⁷ Furthermore, self-restraint is commonly reactionary and the result of legislative oversight and regulation with little regard to defense industry and economic concerns.²⁸ "The prevailing buyers' market is engendering intense competition between suppliers at

all tiers of the trade for the critical sales that can preserve a nation's defense industries, jobs and balance of payments."²⁹

If a desired outcome of the US national strategy is a smaller national defense establishment, then any serious comprehensive arms transfer policy must also include assistance and incentives for defense conversion programs and agreements.³⁰ In general, industry is skeptical of government support and the feasibility of converting military plants to civilian use. The record of defense-industry conversion in the United States is mixed. Boeing's attempt at producing railway cars and Grumman's failure in manufacturing buses, provide recent examples of the complex nature of defense conversion.³¹

Despite all of these concerns, world-wide defense-industry conversion will continue. Reforming defense industries in Europe and Russia will look to the United States for leadership and example. Although the US will continue to support defense conversion in Russia and in the former Soviet Union, domestic defense-industry conversion will be the model for world-wide reform. However difficult, US unilateral self-restraint, in the form of export controls and leadership in multilateral regimes, sets the stage for broader multilateral successes.

Multilateralism is the fundamental tenet of the Clinton Administration's National Security Strategy--"...multilaterally when possible, unilaterally when necessary, but always aimed at building consensus around American policy preferences."³² Therefore, the multilateral focus of conventional arms transfer

and control is a natural continuation of the ways in which the Clinton Administration intends to pursue US policy goals.

Multilateralism can be effective when commitment is strong and policy ends are clear and attainable.³³ Recent Clinton Administration multilateral successes in the form of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the United Nations inclusion in the Bosnia crisis, strengthen US resolve and commitment to multilateralism. In the global arena, "...the pattern of a state's participation in international organizations, military alliances, and other multilateral arrangements reveals how it and others view its preferences."³⁴

The United States' long-standing hope for peace is, not surprisingly, rooted in cooperation and participation in multilateral military and nonmilitary processes that expand markets and promote democracy. As stated recently by Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, at a US State Department Forum: "With the end of the Cold War our challenges abroad have become more complex....Our security depends upon fighting threats ...threats that call for international cooperation."³⁵

Multilateral concepts to influence arms transfers are many, including security assistance and supplier, regional, and global cooperation and negotiation. Generally, current multilateral arms transfer control concepts can be placed in one of three categories: oversight, restraint, and transparency. Oversight is accomplished through regulations imposed by bureaucracies,

laws or international organizations. Restraint or control can be defined as limiting specific weapon systems in terms of quality and quantity, while transparency is the amount of overall information available on arms transfers and policies.³⁶

Complementing and balancing its multilateral approach to arms transfers that included consideration for US industry and rigorous sales criteria, the Administration is focusing significant effort on control and restraint through the concept of transparency.³⁷

Transparency is the least intrusive option, and possibly the most effective means to promote cooperation and control in arms transfers. If multilateral efforts are the cornerstone to the Clinton Administration arms transfer concepts, transparency and confidence-building measures (CBM) are the foundation for its future success.

As previously discussed, traditional ways to control arms transfers have long centered on increased bureaucracy, regulation, and monitoring. CBMs soften these traditional concepts of arms control, while encouraging increased openness and dialogue. CBMs may take on various forms, but it is the willingness of each participant to establish specific information exchange goals, conference agenda and time tables, that leads to a greater trust and confidence.³⁸ Transparency and confidence-building measures are less structured ways to promote long-term trust and achieve tangible results.³⁹ Establishing common goals, through close coordination and open access to information

relevant to treaty or regime maintenance, clearly simplifies the ever-changing nature of conventional arms transfers. Thus, a combination of multilateral restraint through transparency and CBMs, tempered by self-restraint, may be the best approach for future successes. But what resources (means) are available to turn these complex concepts into reality?

US POLICY MEANS (RESOURCES)

This is the point at which many far-reaching concepts and associated objectives unceremoniously die. Resources to implement arms transfer policy concepts range from intangibles, such as leadership and diplomacy, to existing multilateral regime structures and manpower.

Arms transfers have become deeply entrenched in international relations. Consequently, in an effort to provide international control of conventional arms and limit illicit trade, many states established regimes to negotiate transfer criteria and discuss related issues. Relevant multilateral arms and military technology control regimes include: the New Forum (the restructured Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls--COCOM); the Australia Group; the Missile Technology Control Regime; the Zangger Committee; the Nuclear Suppliers' Group; the Supercomputer Regime; the UN Conventional Arms Registry; and the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention. These are but a few of the many, effective existing structures.

Future arms control expectations are, in most cases, dependent on already existing control regimes. Within these and other multilateral organizations, concepts such as transparency, oversight, and control can be encouraged and matured. However, both regime maintenance and the exercise of leadership and diplomacy are dependent to varying degrees on funding. The entire industrial world may have a stake in the success of multilateral regimes, but one significant resource--dollars--is severely lacking.⁴⁰

To make matters worse, multilateral fora provide for slow, frustrating dialogue. Return on investment in multilateral or multinational programs is often long-term, not readily visible and difficult to define.⁴¹ For example, the Clinton Administration has considerable difficulty gaining financial support for the United Nations. The US is in arrears to the UN approximately one billion dollars, while Congress is significantly limiting its overall International Affairs Budget.⁴²

Yet, it is in the UN where dramatic developments in arms transfer transparency began with the UN Conventional Arms Transfer Registry--an arms control regime with significant potential.⁴³ Fortunately, US acceptance of multilateral necessities may be forthcoming. Recent bipartisan efforts in Congress have led to a three-part plan to pay the nearly \$1 billion dollars in unpaid United Nations dues and other arrears

in exchange for a greater say in Peacekeeping Operations and guarantees of United Nation reforms.⁴⁴

The Administration's near-prescriptive commitment to multilateral efforts, transparency, and confidence-building measures is clear.

As arms control, whether regional or global, becomes increasingly multilateral...We will continue to seek greater transparency of conventional weapons and, where appropriate, restraint in the transfer of conventional weapons and global military spending. The UN register of conventional arms transfers is a start in promoting greater transparency of weapons transfers and buildups, but more needs to be done."⁴⁵

Obviously, the risks to achieving US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy objectives rest with a lack of resources. As the world's foremost arms trader and remaining superpower, the US must lead the way in global arms transfer policy. US leadership and influence is expected and intrinsically linked to the preservation of existing multilateral regimes.

THE EUROPEAN EXPERIENCE AND US POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Leadership and diplomacy, tied directly to many successful multilateral efforts in post-Cold War Europe, will promote public embrace of assertive multilateralism.⁴⁶ Multilateral successes include a general arms transfer agreement between France, Germany, the United States, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Russia, and South Korea. The bases of this agreement were that military technologies may pose a common threat, multilateral export controls are an effective tool to limit those threats, and

export controls should not interfere with states' sovereignty or legitimate security and commercial interests. ⁴⁷

While this general agreement may only illuminate the obvious, it openly represents the realities of an international consensus that rejects complete and total disarmament and considers arms transfers a necessary element of a country's foreign and domestic policies.⁴⁸ Such multilateral pronouncements identify the importance of arms transfers, while providing the visibility needed to work towards effective transfer policies. Arms transfers will not be eliminated in the near-term; however, efforts to improve transparency and control through multilateral regimes must be vigorously pursued.

Well-known arms control successes in Europe are based largely on consensus gained through multilateral regimes. For example, the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty provides a model framework to apply arms transfer criteria.⁴⁹ By reducing and regulating the level of conventional forces in Europe, arms transfer criteria are indirectly applied through regional benchmarks. As the drama of a changing European landscape continues, acquisition of other weapons systems and modernization of treaty-limited equipment (TLE) could then be negotiated against a common baseline.⁵⁰

Other successful programs in Europe, including National Military Strategy efforts of military-to-military contacts and security assistance, are routinely providing greater transparency and confidence in multilateral negotiations. But perhaps the

greatest successes of European arms transfers and controls reside within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

In this regard, NATO is much more than a security alliance. While security is the primary focus of the Alliance agenda, the security structure provides a means for dialogue, cooperation and confidence-building among allies that far exceeded the expectations envisioned for NATO in 1948. Significant lessons learned from the NATO experience with confidence-building measures indicate that CBMs are extremely successful at breaking down the wall of secrecy surrounding military organizations, are relatively resilient to external controversies, and that patience is essential to long-term rewards.⁵¹ NATO will continue to play a major role in regional security, while well-established diplomatic relations and high levels of confidence will help to achieve security objectives at the lowest force levels required.⁵² NATO competencies were further extended and developed through the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and Partnership for Peace.

The NACC provides a forum for dialogue among NATO member states, Central and Eastern European states that belonged to the former Warsaw Pact, and the successor states to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Within the structure of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, formerly CSCE), arms control efforts continue to be successful and remain a high regional priority.⁵³ OSCE members, in

accordance with the charter of the United Nations, are committed to the principles of UN arms transfers to enhance transparency and eliminate the transfer of destabilizing weaponry and technology.⁵⁴ In addition to promoting regional stability, the support of OSCE members will strengthen the UN role in establishing a global multilateral arms control registry.

The Partnership for Peace (PfP) further increases opportunities for military and civilian contacts, also leading to greater confidence and transparency in negotiations. Specific PfP goals include gaining transparency of a country's national defense planning and budgeting processes and ensuring democratic control of their armed forces.⁵⁵ Goals of PfP are obviously consistent with US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy objectives. PfP successes have set the agenda for future outreach programs and engagement with former Eastern European neighbors. These spin-offs, providing for greater transparency and confidence, also lower resource requirements for formal monitoring and inspection, when needed.

Successes in conventional arms control and transfers in Europe are clear and remarkably reflective of US Conventional Arms Transfer goals. In some respects, relentless US political leadership and the commitment of multilateral negotiators are the pillars of these successes.⁵⁶ In essence, efforts to control arms transfers in Europe have supplemented the global United Nations multilateral transparency regime.

Unfortunately, multilateral efforts have been less effective beyond a regional context. According to Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbott, addressing the Stimson Center Forum on America's Role in World Affairs and the Future of the United Nations: "One important moral of the end of the Cold War--a story that is still unfolding and will provide us with plenty of suspense for a long time--is that the United States must maintain its position of international leadership."⁵⁷ And leadership in conventional arms transfer policy is most effective when the trust and confidence of the all international players are high.

Therefore, the United States must provide leadership of multilateral arms control and transfer regimes. Most importantly, US leadership is necessary to maintain the focus of the replacement regime to the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM) on conventional arms transfers.⁵⁸ The COCOM was the preeminent multilateral arms transfer regime during the Cold War, imposing strict procedures for denying weapons and technology to the former Soviet Union, Warsaw Pact, and communist bloc. While the rationale underlying COCOM cooperation is gone, weapons-related transfer controls are even more critical today.⁵⁹

The emerging replacement for the COCOM is called the New Forum (or Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Technologies). The New Forum will succeed only if US leadership and direction are committed for the long-term. This new regime will be launched in April 1996 at a

meeting in Vienna. According to Lynn Davis, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, "For the first time, there is a global mechanism for controlling transfers of conventional armaments, and a venue in which governments can consider collectively the implications of various transfers on their international and regional security interests."⁶⁰

Additionally, the US must capitalize on the successes of the UN Register of Conventional Arms and expand its categories of weapons to include, at a minimum, small arms. The Register is a voluntary means of transparency, compatible with states' sovereignty concerns, which also increases confidence and trust among participants.⁶¹ The Register concept will be strengthened by the New Forum provisions that require increased information sharing about conventional arms. Likewise, US government officials have encouraged the so-called group of major arms suppliers--Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the United States--to take an active leadership role in improving the regime.⁶²

While leadership and voluntary compliance with UN transparency efforts promote confidence and trust, country participation is still sporadic. Because there is no universal system to reward or penalize participating or nonparticipating countries, there are few immediate incentives to move toward full transparency. Until global enforcement tools and incentives can be formalized, the US is leading an effort to improve and

encourage conventional arms transparency. An Army team, led by Lieutenant General Johnnie Wilson, Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, was established to assist in implementing the new US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy. This Army team participates in military-to-military contacts, with access to arms transfer transparency data. These data contribute to arms transfer registries and decisions that may affect regional balances of power and stability.⁶³

Although the UN Arms Control Registry is a solid beginning, the United States must continue to exercise leadership and direct United Nations efforts to link country participation in the UN Register with receipt of weaponry. Risks to transparency failures in arms transfer regimes might lead to American soldiers facing American weapons in battle.

Ultimately, the maintenance of current and future multilateral arms transfers policies and controls should remain with existing multilateral (multinational) regimes--most notably the United Nations. The Clinton Administration must focus on success in Europe, streamline and empower value-added agencies like the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, while still leading the charge for a "cultural change" in pursuing multilateral efforts.

Specifically, the US could propose reconvening the Perm 5 arms transfer limitation talks between the UN Security Council's permanent members, continue strong leadership in establishing the New Forum agenda, sponsor security dialogue between potential

regional antagonists, and negotiate multilateral agreements designed to eliminate government subsidies of arms exports within a five- to ten-year period.⁶⁴ Regardless of specific initiatives, US leadership in multilateral regimes is the fundamental requirement for any long-term successes in controlling global arms transfers.

Continued pressure from the Administration has focused the debate in Congress on the long-term benefits of multilateralism. Many hope that public support will grow in the US and throughout the world "...for the adoption of multilateral controls on conventional arms transfers, reflecting the belief that uncontrolled transfers--irrespective of the supplier and recipients involved--pose a significant threat to international peace and stability."⁶⁵ Details of how a multilateral arms export regime might be developed are, at this point, less important than the will to vigorously pursue such a regime.⁶⁶

CONCLUSION

The first formal US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy (PDD-34) in over fourteen years is clearly linked to both the National Security and National Military Strategy, with multilateralism a common thread to accomplishing objectives. The centerpiece of PDD-34 is to pursue multilateral restraint through increased transparency in multilateral efforts. It supports arms transfers to meet national security needs, while restricting transfers that may threaten or bring instability to a particular region.

Linking the Arms Transfer Policy to the National Security and National Military Strategy provides additional ways and means to enhance the transparency of arms transfers through current multilateral regimes, Military-to-Military Contacts, and Security Assistance programs, to name a few. Conventional arms transfer ends are far-reaching and achievable in light of numerous ways to reach those goals. However, resources are limited. Experiences with arms control and disarmament regimes in Europe provide many successes applicable to further implementation of the US Conventional Arms Transfer Policy. In many respects, European and the United States arms transfers and control histories parallel current US conventional arms transfer aims.

Furthermore, the Partnership for Peace initiative is clearly supportive of US arms transfer policies. The Clinton Administration would do well to promote the successes of the arms control regimes with respect to Europe, while strengthening a resolve for multilateralism. In the long-term, a "cultural change" is needed in the United States before improved funding and support for multilateral organizations and regimes are realized. To meet Arms Transfer Policy goals, the Clinton Administration must aggressively pursue resource funding, leverage successes in Europe, and provide leadership to future development of the UN Register of Conventional Arms and implementation of the successor regime to the COCOM--the New Forum.

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