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**The Role of Non-State Actors in the European
Small Arms Regime**

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Introduction

A notable change in the international security environment since the end of the Cold War has been the growing prominence of the 'new' security issues such as anti-personnel landmines, the trade in conflict diamonds, or the proliferation of small arms.¹ In addition, non-state actors and policy networks have emerged as prominent players in the creation and formulation of regional and international control regimes that seek to counter these new security threats. A well-known example is the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), an umbrella organisation that brought together some 1200 nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) from over 60 countries, campaigning for and lobbying governments to agree on a total prohibition of anti-personal landmines. Another example is the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). It acts as a coordinator for some 500 non-governmental members from over 100 countries campaigning for strengthened governmental controls on the trade in small arms. Further noteworthy are the policy coalitions that have formed between governments and non-governmental networks on new security issues. Together with the Canadian and Austrian governments, for example, the ICBL campaigned for the convening of an international conference in Ottawa in 1997 to ban anti-personnel landmines. Similar, in the months before the 2001 United Nations (UN) Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms, there emerged a "powerful coalition between States, international organisations and civil society ... to promote effective global action."²

From a theoretical perspective, such policy coalitions raise the question of whether, over the last decade, there has been a trend towards the governance of new security issues. Thus, one can justifiably ask whether there has been a shift in policy influence away from governments and towards the authority of non-state actors. This paper assesses this question with reference to the role of NGOs in the creation of the current European Union regime on conventional arms exports and small arms control. The formation of this regime, based on three major policy instruments adopted by the EU member states in 1997/98, was driven by an emerging policy coalition between 'like-minded' governments, which also closely cooperated with certain NGOs and policy research experts. In addition, by 1997, there had developed a transnational advocacy network among several hundred

Previous versions of this paper were presented at the International Studies Association Conference in Portland, Oregon (Feb.03) and the British International Studies Association Conference in London, UK (Dec.02). I thank Dr. Bono for her comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

¹ The terms small arms and light weapons, hereafter referred to small arms, are employed as a generic term to weapons that can be carried by one to three persons. They include weapons such as assault rifles, light machine guns, grenade launchers, and related ammunition. The phenomenon of small arms proliferation consists of a) destabilising accumulations and spreads of military small arms and light weapons, b) illicit trafficking in these weapons, and c) the misuse of these weapons by armed forces.

² Greene, O., Clegg, E., Meek, S. and O'Callaghan, G. (2000) *Briefing 1 – An Agenda for the UN 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects* (London, Biting the Bullet: BASIC, International Alert, Saferworld, 2000), p.2.

European NGOs, which lobbied governments for strengthened arms control measures.³ This paper will assess the importance of NGOs in the European small arms regime with a view to determine whether their example provides evidence for a shift of policy authority away from its traditional state-centric sources towards a governance of small arms control.

The paper is structured as follows. The first section introduces the concept of policy networks in more detail. It also looks at some of the factors underlying the emergence of new security issues and related networks. I then turn to the European control regime on conventional arms exports and small arms control, and, in particular, the governmental competition underlying the emergence of this control regime. Lastly, I turn to the specific role of NGOs in the creation of the European arms regime.⁴ I argue that non-state actors made significant contributions to ‘winning coalitions’ by assisting and facilitating the emergence of governmental co-operation on arms control. Further, it seems that NGOs had significant input into the formulation of the regime. Thus, it is especially the dynamic nature of the EU regime, providing for annual reviews of the policy instruments and reports on arms exports that can be attributed to non-state actor advocacy. Nevertheless, it is evident that governments and governmental leadership remain key to change on small arms policies, and that even like-minded governments have limits to their co-operation with nongovernmental actors. In short, while non-state actors are certainly of consequence to the European arms regime, there is little evidence for a shift toward a governance of small arms policies.

The Context

Policy networks on ‘new security’ issues

As mentioned, in conjunction with the rise of new security issues, there emerged a number of issue-specific policy networks in the 1990s. Policy networks here are understood as the formal and informal rules and interpersonal relationships between policy actors who share certain goals and aims, and who seek to influence the policy options adopted within their issue-area. Transnational policy networks refer to “coalitions of actors who regularly interact across national boundaries” and who include at least one actor who “is a non-state agent or does not operate on behalf of a national government or an intergovernmental organization”.⁵ Common to these new security networks is their

³ Saferworld *The Case for a European Code of Conduct on the Arms Trade* Pamphlet, undated (London, Saferworld), p.2.

⁴ A note on the sources informing this paper: it relies largely on information provided by non-governmental organisations working on arms control and qualitative interviews with participants and observers of the transnational networks under discussion. In particular, several interviews with such participants and observers in London, Bradford and Brussels in December 2002 – February 2003 have provided substantial input to this paper. Contacted NGOs and centres include Saferworld, BASIC, Campaign against the arms trade, Dept. of Peace Studies / University of Bradford, IANSA and GRIP.

⁵ Risse-Kappen, T. (ed.) (1995a) *Bringing transnational relations back in: Non-state actors, domestic structures and international institutions* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.3.

focus on principled ideas, that is, “normative ideas that specify criteria for distinguishing right from wrong and just from unjust”.⁶ Thus, they are policy coalitions based on shared sets of principled and causal beliefs, as well as a common policy enterprise.⁷ They seek to influence governmental policy choices through the “strategic use of norms, ideas and information”⁸ and by “providing ideas and information to [political] allies”, by “coordinating policy initiatives”, and by “appealing to international norms that resonate in the domestic context.”⁹ A well-known example of non-governmental participants in policy networks are epistemic communities. They are networks “of professionals with recognized expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within [their] domain or issue-area.”¹⁰ They tend to be composed of scientific experts “to whom governments turn for knowledge in times of uncertainty”.¹¹ Their activity has been noted especially in environmental issue-areas such as the international protection of the ozone layer, the banning of chlorofluorocarbons,¹² or the international management of whaling.¹³ Such epistemic communities have also been identified in the security realm. Transnational security networks formed, for example, in the 1950s and 60s, when European policy advocates entered into transnational coalitions with U.S. scientists, activists and government officials to influence the American position on the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.¹⁴ Non-governmental policy experts have also participated in policy networks on Soviet and post-Soviet security policies, and have closely interacted with networks of their American counterparts.¹⁵ A further type of transnational networks of relevance here are advocacy networks, that is, networks between nongovernmental organisations, researchers and campaigners lobbying for shared policy aims.¹⁶ These nongovernmental networks, while also seeking to influence state policies, are not directly participating in policy formulation processes but rather seek to exert pressure through public campaigning and the mobilisation of the

⁶ Goldstein, J., Keohane, R. (eds.) (1993) *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, p.9.

⁷ Haas, P. (1992a) ‘Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination’, *International Organization* 46.1 (Winter 1992):1-35, p.3.

⁸ Evangelista, M. (1999) *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, p.389.

⁹ Evangelista 1999:381f.

¹⁰ Haas 1992a:3.

¹¹ Price, R. (1998) ‘Reversing the gun sights: transnational civil society targets land mines’ *International Organization* 52.3 (Summer 1998):613-44, p.620.

¹² Haas 1992a and Haas, P. (1992b) ‘Banning chlorofluorocarbons: epistemic community efforts to protect stratospheric ozone’, in Haas 1992a:187-224.

¹³ Peterson, M. (1992) ‘Whalers, cetologists, environmentalists, and the international management of whaling’ in Haas 1992a:147-186.

¹⁴ Risse-Kappen, T. (1995b) *Cooperation among Democracy: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p.105ff. See also Adler, E. (1992) ‘The emergence of cooperation: national epistemic communities and the international evolution of the idea of nuclear arms control’ *International Organization* 46.1 (Winter 1992):101-145.

¹⁵ see, in particular, Evangelista 1999; the edited volume by Risse-Kappen 1995a; and Checkel, J. (1997) *Ideas and International Political Change: Soviet/Russian Behavior and the End of the Cold War* New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

¹⁶ See, for example, Keck, M. and Sikkink, K. (1998) *Activists beyond Borders – Advocacy Networks in International Politics* Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

general public. Methods employed in this regard include, for example, letter-writing and media campaigns to encourage government officials and ministers to adopt certain policies.

The emergence of networks on new security issues

The networks on new security issues have formed as a consequence of the following factors. Importantly, the end of the Cold War implied new scope on international security agendas that were no longer dominated by superpower confrontation and the dominant threats of major conventional warfare and use of weapons of mass destruction. This meant that organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and others with direct experience and knowledge of conflicts in the developing world were increasingly successful in their promotion of new policy issues among governments and non-governmental actors. The end of the Cold War also implied a refocusing of the agendas of NGOs with established arms control, disarmament and security programmes to take account of emerging policy issues that fell within their mandate. Such actors with an 'early awareness' of the new security threats then attempted to raise the salience of issues on the agendas of governments, international organisations and the broader civil society. Striking in this context is that such awareness raising often started through the activities of only a handful of actors who shared a strategic vision of how to achieve a change of governmental policies. For example, the initial impetus for an international movement to ban landmines was launched by some three NGOs in 1992 when they agreed that such a movement was not only an urgent need, but also a feasible undertaking.¹⁷

It was also important for the emergence of the new networks that the United Nations General Assembly and the Secretariat picked up policy issues the United Nations was experiencing through its presence in the developing world and, in particular, in zones of crisis and violent conflict. By reference to new policy concerns, the adoption of resolutions in the General Assembly and speeches by the Secretary General, the UN significantly contributed to the identification of relevant issues for the international community and for governmental co-operation. With relation to small arms, for example, the then Secretary General, Boutros Boutros Ghali was among the first on the international political level in 1995 to call for action on the proliferation and excessive accumulation of small arms.¹⁸ Also, the UN Institute for Disarmament (UNIDIR), directly confronted with the effects of small arms in conflict and post-conflict situations, began a series of reports that highlighted the

¹⁷ See, for example, Cameron, M., Lawson, R. and Tomlin, B. (eds.) (1998) *To Walk Without Fear: The Global Movement to Ban Landmines* Toronto: Oxford University Press. For a further exploration of transnational advocacy surrounding the ban on landmines see Hubert, D. (2000) *The Landmine Ban: A case study in Humanitarian Advocacy* Occasional Paper 42, Rhode Island: Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Brown University; Price 1998; Rutherford, K. (2000a) 'The evolving arms control agenda: implications of the role of NGOs in banning antipersonnel landmines' *World Politics* 53.1 (October 2000):74-114; Rutherford, K. (2000b) 'A theoretical examination of disarming states: ngos and anti-personnel landmines' *International Politics* 37 (December 2000):457-478.

¹⁸ United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali, *Agenda for Peace: A Supplement* (New York, United Nations, January 1995).

effects of the proliferation of these weapons. Reports by a panel and a group of governmental experts, commissioned by the General Assembly to analyse the problem and to suggest possible countermeasures, not only contributed to a clarification of the scope and nature of the problem, but also by making the issue acceptable on the level of governments.¹⁹

Further, crucial to the rise of new security issues on policy agendas, has been the interest of certain governments to champion and actively promote policy changes on regional and international levels. Canada and Austria for example, began to take on leadership positions on the issue of AP mines and to rally like-minded governments around the aim of a complete ban of AP mines. With regards to small arms, in the mid 90s Colombia and Mexico in particular started to push for change on the level of the Organisations of American States, pointing towards the link between drug trafficking, organised crime and the illicit trafficking in firearms. In West Africa, on the initiative of Mali, which was facing the problem of small arms proliferation in the aftermath of its civil war, there also developed impetus for greater regional controls. With the subsequent support of Nigeria, states member to the Economic Community of Western African States eventually adopted in 1998 a moratorium on the import and export of small arms. Likewise, in Europe, several states began to include small arms control on their agendas, and to champion greater regional controls. Thus, after several years of agenda-setting by non-state actors and the United Nations, governments began to accept that the issue of small arms proliferation was an issue requiring urgent action and on which policy change was potentially possible.²⁰ Moreover, the openness of certain governments towards aims promoted by non-state actors led to the emergence of the policy coalitions under discussion here.

The interests in new security issues among certain governments, as well as among private funding bodies for NGOs, also implied the increased availability of funds for non-state actors to engage in research, campaigning and lobbying on such issues. Thus, private grant making institutions such as the Carnegie Corporation, the MacArthur Foundation, the Ploughshares Fund, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Winston Foundation for World Peace all began to include small arms issues in their relevant programmes on international peace, security and social justice. This then also meant that there was an increasing number of NGOs which started to focus on new security threats and to join the efforts of those actors who were already promoting policy changes. Particularly interesting in this context is the funding of non-state actors working on small arms control by governments sympathetic to their aims. It is unclear at present how large the proportion of such governmental funding is in relation to non-governmental sources such as private foundations or

¹⁹ See <http://disarmament.un.org/cab/>, the website of the Conventional Arms Branch of the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, for relevant links.

²⁰ For an elaboration on the role of certain governments in the creation of regional and international control initiatives, see Greene, O. (2000) 'Examining international responses to illicit arms trafficking', *Crime, Law & Social Change* 33 (2000):151-190.

membership contributions. Further, several organisations refuse governmental funds on principle. Nevertheless, it is certainly justified to say that governments fund much of the current activity among NGOs on small arms control. This at least is borne out by, for example, the present funding structure of IANSA. While IANSA seeks to finance the majority of its activities through private grants of, for example, the above named American Foundations and Funds, it is, as of early 2003, receiving most of its funds from the UK government.²¹ Governments have also financed or part-financed many of the seminars and workshops on small arms that bring together government officials, policy experts and NGOs, and they are major contributors to such joint research ventures as the *Bite the Bullet* project. This project emerged as a collaborative effort of several UK based research centres and policy experts on the fringes of the preparatory committee meetings for the 2001 UN Conference on the Illicit Small Arms Trade. Its aim is to contribute to an informed policy debate between governments by identifying priorities for action and suggesting policy options. Notably, the UK Department for International Development, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland have financed much of this activity.²² Similarly, the *Small Arms Survey*, a collaborative effort between research centres, policy experts and NGOs from around the world, is engaged in the research of the small arms trade with a view to provide an annual overview of aspects of the trade in these weapons, as well as to identify policy options. While representing an independent project based at the University of Geneva, it is financed largely by the governments of Switzerland, Belgium, the UK, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden.²³

In sum, underlying the emergence of policy networks on new security issues have been an increased scope for action on international agendas provided by the end of the Cold War, the efforts for raising awareness by small numbers of organisations and the inclusion of relevant issues on the agendas of the United Nations and, importantly, of certain governments. There then also emerged patterns of co-operation between non-state actors and certain governments championing causes that were strongly supported by these non-state actors. With this general rise in attention being paid to new security issues, there was also the growing availability of funds for NGOs. It is against this background that by now a multitude of NGOs have joined the policy networks that have crystallised around ‘new’ security issues. A relevant question is, of course, whether such policy networks matter, and, in particular, whether non-state actors can play significant roles in such policy networks. It is with reference to the European small arms regime and the role of NGOs in its creation that I will approach these questions in the following.

²¹ Personal communication, telephone, 20th February 2003.

²² For further information on the Biting the Bullet project, visit www.international-alert.org.

²³ Small Arms Survey (2002) *Annuaire sur les armes légères 2002*, Geneva: vi.

The European Small Arms Regime

Over the last years, states member to the European Union have been amongst the most active in international efforts to address the proliferation of small arms. On a regional level, they also have created a control regime on small arms that seeks to combat the illicit trafficking in conventional arms, to promote restraint and responsibility in arms export policies, as well as providing assistance to third countries affected by destabilising small arms accumulations. In the following, I elaborate on this control regime and point towards the particular dynamics within this regime. I then turn to the intergovernmental policy competition that shaped the creation of European small arms regime. I argue that it was a coalition of like-minded governments that was crucial to the creation of this regime and its dynamic nature.

Major EU policy instruments on small arms

The current EU regime on small arms is based on three major policy instruments, two of which address small arms within the broader context on controls on the trade in conventional weapons. The first of these is the EU Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking. Adopted by the EU Council in June 1997, the Programme recognises accumulations and illicit trafficking of conventional arms and, in particular, of small arms and light weapons, as a threat to international security as well as to the internal stability and human rights situation in affected countries. It seeks to foster the collective efforts made to address illicit trafficking through means such as enhanced cross-border co-operation among law enforcement agencies, and capacity building for such agencies in countries requesting assistance. Second, in June 1998, the EU Council adopted the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. The Code seeks to foster co-operation among EU member states by establishing common criteria against which member states will, on a case-by-case basis, consider the granting or denial of arms export licenses. These criteria aim at preventing exports that could contribute to regional instability or that may be used in internal repression or international aggression. They also include concern for the international obligations of arms exporting states under, for example, United Nations arms embargoes, as well as for the risk of illicit diversion of arms transfers or re-exportation of arms to undesirable end-users. The Code therefore offers a common framework for the establishment of high common standards for responsible arms transfers. Significantly, the Code also includes operative provisions for denial notification and consultation mechanisms among member states. Thus, states will inform all other participating states of the denials for specific arms export licenses. States agree to not use such information for their own commercial advantage, but, should they wish to grant an essentially identical transaction, they will consult the state, which previously denied the transfer license. In addition, the EU Code contains provisions for member states to draw up confidential annual reports on their arms exports. These are used as the basis for a consolidated report on arms exports that is submitted to the EU Council for its annual review of the Code operations. This review meeting also identifies areas in the Code requiring further improvements. The third major policy instrument of the EU regime is the Joint Action on

Small Arms. It was adopted by the EU Council in December 1998, and it is concerned with the adverse affects of small arms accumulations and spreads on security, post-conflict rehabilitation and sustainable development. It promotes responsible arms export policies and national weapons management practices. It also promotes technical and financial support to countries requesting assistance. Assistance in such situations can support the management of surplus weapons and voluntary weapons collection programmes targeting illegally held small arms.

These policy documents are notable in particular for their dynamic elements of annual reviews and continued consultations and information exchange among EU members. Thus, there is now a process, which puts conventional and small arms control issues regularly on the agenda of relevant EU organs and national governments, and which facilitates further co-operation on national arms export and other control policies. Indeed, it is fair to argue that this regime has, by now, developed its own momentum towards greater co-operation. As argued by the European Parliament, “the Code of Conduct has its own built-in dynamics. The application of the Code is leading member states towards greater dialogue, mutual understanding and convergence. It is clear that the initial mistrust of some member states is giving way to greater confidence.”²⁴ In addition, there is also a move toward greater transparency on European arms exports. For example, since 1999, the EU Council publishes the annual consolidated report on arms export under the Code of Conduct. By now, most member states also publish the annual national reports that form the basis for the consolidated report. These states are Belgium, Denmark, Finland and France, Germany, Ireland and Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom. As will become evident in the subsequent discussion, the emergence of such a regime based on a dynamic process among EU states was not predetermined or inevitable. Rather, the nature of the current regime is the outcome of intense political competition between various actors seeking to shape multilateral control efforts.

The co-ordination of arms control policies

The origins of the present regime on conventional weapons can be traced back to 1969/70 and the creation of the European Political Co-operation (EPC). This intergovernmental mechanism provided for regular meetings of the foreign ministries of European Community (EC) members, and therefore offered a forum in which to co-ordinate national policies on selected issues so as to enhance the collective voice of Western European interests. At times, such co-ordination also extended to security policies and arms export controls as evidenced by the EC arms embargoes on, for example, Libya and Syria in 1985, and South Africa in 1986. However, the EPC remained largely limited in its use by member states, which kept exclusive national control over their arms trade. Thus, while co-ordinating their policies on certain issues, governments pursued many other foreign and security

²⁴ European Parliament (2002) *Report on the Council's Third Annual Report according to Operative Provision 8 of the European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers* A5-0286/2002 (Brussels, European Parliament, 10 September 2002), p.9.

issues independently of each other. A change in this European approach occurred, in particular, with the Gulf War in 1990/1. Thus, several European arms exporting countries realised to have inadvertently contributed to regional instability in the Gulf. The conflict also demonstrated the shortcomings of a common control system relying on exclusively national policies. For instance, “the denial of exports to Iraq by some Community members, for reasons of international security, had little practical effect given the export practices of other Community members.”²⁵ In 1991, responding to this shortcoming, the Political Committee of the EPC convened an ad-hoc working group of mid-ranking officials from Community members to investigate the possibilities for enhancing the common approach to arms exports. In response, this intergovernmental working group on conventional arms exports, known under its French acronym COARM, negotiated a list of common arms export criteria to serve as the standard against which member states would consider the granting or denial of export licenses. These criteria were adopted by the EU Councils of Luxembourg and Lisbon in 1991/92, and served as the basis for strengthened co-operation on conventional arms control. Further, in 1994, the mandate of COARM was revised, and subsequently not only included the comparison of national regulations and procedures, but was also extended to exploring possible steps toward a harmonisation of national arms export policies.²⁶ Thus, there were clearly steps toward a change from the mere co-ordination to a greater convergence of arms control policies.

At the same time it was evident that debates on any further development toward greater co-operation lacked consensus among European governments on the desirability of greater multilateral controls. On one side of the debate, there were states such as Germany and the Netherlands, which argued for common arms export policies at a high level of controls. Likewise, Ireland argued for the creation of a Code of Conduct on arms transfers under the auspices of the United Nations. These states pointed out that the common criteria, and, in particular, the lack of common interpretations left the European arms regime with significant weaknesses. This led to a situation similar to the one encountered before the adoption of the Luxembourg / Lisbon criteria. For example, while Portugal and Italy were observing a self-imposed arms embargo on Indonesia, Germany, the UK, and the Netherlands had continued their exports. Likewise, some member states exported to sub-Saharan Africa, while others denied licenses on the grounds of undesirable effects of arms exports to the region.²⁷ It was against this background that certain governments started to identify common interests in their security aims, and to consequently coalesce around the aim of strengthening multilateral measures. Importantly, these states included Germany, which had weight not only for its general political and economic

²⁵ Saferworld (1991) *Regulating Arms Exports: A Programme for the European Community* Report (London, Saferworld, 1991), p.12.

²⁶ EU Council decision of 29 December 1994. In Davis, I. (1999) *The Regulation of Arms and Dual-Use Exports by EU Member States: A Comparative Analysis of Germany, Sweden and the UK*, Ph.D. thesis (Bradford, University of Bradford, 1999), p.156.

²⁷ BASIC, Saferworld and World Development Movement *A European Code of Conduct on the Arms Trade* Pamphlet, undated (London, BASIC, Saferworld, WDM), p.1.

clout, but also because it is a major European arms exporter. Germany's voice therefore had a credibility when speaking in favour of stronger arms controls that could not be matched by other 'pro-control' states such as Ireland, which has no significant defence industry. Further states in this coalition, however, included the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark, all of which have a small to medium-sized defence industry. These states began to support each other's arms control positions in intergovernmental negotiations in the European Council as well as in the Council working groups. There consequently formed a policy coalition that included small and medium states, as well as one of the 'big' European players. It was by finding and using a collective voice that this policy coalition sought to influence negotiations on the EC/EU level.

On the other side of the political debate were the other two 'big' European players and arms exporters, that is, France and the UK. Thus, given their overseas interests, these states preferred a multilateral system that provided for minimal co-ordination on conventional arms trade while leaving room for national interests and flexibility.²⁸ These differences in national attitudes on arms exports are nicely summarised in the following quote from a research report from 1992:

On the EC level, concepts vary largely and make it difficult to agree on a single policy. At one extreme, France expounds a defence philosophy based on national autonomy and independent nuclear capability. This implies self-sufficiency in weapons production and foreign sales to sustain an industry of the required size. The UK has always seen positive political utility in arms transfers as a means of enhancing the security of non-EC allies of overseas possessions. Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands have distanced themselves from using arms exports as an instrument of foreign policy, and / or taken public positions in favour of restraint. At the far end of the scale come Ireland and Luxembourg, with no evident interest in production or export.²⁹

Importantly, France and the UK could effectively block major developments with regards to multilateral controls. Thus, given the consensus-based nature of decision-making on security policies in the EC/EU, states have an effective veto on significant multilateral change that does not reflect their interests. This gave the UK and France sufficient leverage to ensure that any common framework for the co-ordination of European arms controls would accept the primacy of national interests over multilateral regulations. An example of this protection of national flexibility was given during the consultations on the revision of the COARM mandate in 1994. There, France could limit the importance of changes by having a reference included, which declared that "no mention in the mandate should be construed as curtailing national decision-making capability".³⁰ It was clear

²⁸ Saferworld 1991: III; and Saferworld (1992) *Arms and Dual-Use Exports from the EC: A Common Policy for Regulation and Control* Report (London, Saferworld, 1992), p.5f.

²⁹ Saferworld 1992:5.

³⁰ Adam, B. (ed.) (1995) *Union européenne et exportations d'armes* (Brussel, GRIP, 1995), p.87.

therefore that, by the mid 1990s, like-minded governments were at an impasse in their efforts to significantly alter the existing multilateral arms export system.

The convergence of arms control policies

Two developments in particular worked in favour of the governmental policy coalition aiming for greater multilateral arms controls. The first of these concerns the growing salience of the new security issues. As mentioned, since the early to mid 1990s, there was a growing international awareness of the serious problems that are caused by illicit arms trafficking and small arms proliferation. By 1997 there had consequently developed a certain international momentum toward efforts addressing the issue of small arms proliferation, as well as on the need to counter such proliferation. This momentum also had ramifications in Europe by implicitly supporting the arguments of those governments which were seeking to further common arms control measures on the level of the European Union. Thus, the Dutch government, during its presidency of the EU in early 1997, tabled a proposal for a joint programme to address the issue of small arms and light weapons proliferation. Again, there was considerable political opposition. In particular, such opposition stemmed from the fact that addressing small arms proliferation requires greater restraint and controls of the legal trade in these weapons. As one observer argues, several states were consequently “reluctant to agree to a programme which explicitly focused on restraining legal as well as illicit arms accumulations and transfers”.³¹ As a compromise the Dutch government decided to focus on a programme with a focus on preventing illicit arms flows. While having a restricted focus, the proposed programme would, however, initiate a process of regular practical co-operation of law enforcement agencies, governments and EU bodies. Moreover, it would regularly bring up the issue of conventional arms control on the agenda of, for example, the EU Council of Ministers, and therefore further political momentum toward greater co-operative efforts to combat arms trafficking. Thus, by linking international and regional developments in arms control, the Dutch government successfully negotiated a programme that would establish a process promoting coordination and convergence of national arms export policies. The Programme was therefore also a step by the inter-governmental coalition toward a strengthened multilateral control regime.

The second development of importance occurred several months later with a major policy shift in one of the European key players on arms control. To elaborate, the British general elections in May 1997 brought to power the opposition Labour Party. This led, in July 1997, to the formulation by the new government of an ‘ethical foreign policy’ as the basis for the foreign affairs of the UK. It included a commitment to promoting greater convergence of European arms policies through the promotion of a European code of conduct to govern legal arms exports.³² This was therefore an important shift from

³¹ Greene 2000:171.

³² See the ‘eight point plan’, Labour Party, *Labour’s Policy Pledges for a Responsible Arms Trade*, 13 February 1997 (quoted in Davis 1999:169).

the position of the previous Conservative government and its opposition to a strengthening of multilateral co-operation on arms policies. This shift also meant a decisive change in the constellation of national interests on the European level. Thus, France was becoming isolated among the 'big' three in its opposition to tighter controls, and there was no longer the previously existing consensus between France and the UK to keep legal arms transfers largely off the EU agenda. It was against this background that the UK took over the EU presidency in January 1998. This presented a valuable opportunity for the UK government to take on a leadership role on multilateral arms control by promoting a common code on transfers. Moreover, the chances for the success of a policy initiative seemed favourable. Thus, the UK government could be certain to have the support of the coalition of like-minded governments, which, for years already, had called for a common instrument to strengthen the Luxembourg and Lisbon criteria. Strategically, the UK presidency approached France at an early stage so as to ensure at least the tacit consent of the state, which could be expected to be most important source of opposition. This led to the tabling of a joint Anglo-French draft of a Code of Conduct, which was then negotiated during COARM meetings in the following months.³³ During these negotiations, differences of attitudes and political competition were clearly evident. Such differences existed, in particular, between states such as Sweden, Belgium, Ireland and the Netherlands on the one hand, and France on the other. Views differed on, for example, the formulation of the human rights criteria that would be part of the code. While the former governments favoured general restraint in exports to serious human rights violators, France argued for a formulation that left greater room for national interpretation. France also opposed a publicly accessible EU consolidated report on arms exports, and therefore greater public transparency.³⁴ In the end, consensus could only be reached through several agreements in which the French position prevailed. As explained by a Dutch official: "[a] consensus was required from all 15 member states, France was in a very strong position. It was felt that it was important to get a code agreed even if it meant watering it down."³⁵ The Code was consequently adopted in June 1998. As mentioned, the code includes important dynamic mechanisms that have bolstered momentum among European Union member states toward co-operation and harmonisation of arms control policies. It also opened the way for the negotiation and adoption of the Joint Action on Small Arms under the German EU presidency in 1998. Therewith, European governments had established, in some 18 months, a framework for multilateral arms policies that, while still containing serious shortcomings,³⁶ is, at present, undoubtedly the most sophisticated regional approach to conventional and small arms control.

³³ Davis 1999:170.

³⁴ O'Callaghan, G. (1998) 'EU pays high price for French support on Code of Conduct', BASIC REPORTS (London, BASIC, June 1998).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ See, for example, the report by the European Parliament (quoted above) as well as the current reports by Saferworld and the UK Working Group on Arms (www.saferworld.co.uk).

To sum up, the above account highlights the process by which the current arms regime was developed and the way in which it was driven by a coalition of like-minded states, assisted by international developments and domestic changes. Thus, certain governments started coalescing around shared aims so as to enhance their collective bargaining power. In particular, it was the shift in the policy preferences in Britain, which allowed for the establishment of co-operative measures on the legal exports of conventional weapons, and for an annual review and reporting mechanisms that promote the convergence of arms control policies. In short then, this history of European arms policies demonstrates how the current regime was the outcome of negotiations and bargains between first, competing inter-governmental coalitions, and later, between one of the European key players and the majority of other EU member states. What, then, has been the role of non-state actors in the process that led to the emergence of this regime? It is this question that I turn to in the following section.

The Transnational Policy Network on European Arms Control

As mentioned in the introduction, if there emerged an intergovernmental policy coalition on conventional, and in particular, small arms control, there certainly also formed policy networks between government officials and non-governmental policy experts and NGOs, as well as between a growing number of NGOs themselves. In the following, I will concentrate on the strategy and experiences of the London-based organisation, Saferworld, an independent foreign affairs think tank that was at the centre of the transnational advocacy campaign on the European Code of Conduct on Arms Exports, and which was closely connected to government officials who shared the aim of strengthened multilateral arms controls. I hold that together with its nongovernmental partners, Saferworld could greatly facilitate the emergence of governmental policy coalitions and assist these in their formulation of shared interests on the multilateral level. I further argue that such non-state actors in particular have been at the origin of the dynamics that underpin the current EU regime on small arms.

The transnational campaign on a European code of conduct

If the 1990/91 Gulf War sparked inter-governmental interest in enhancing existing multilateral arms control, it also offered an opportunity to non-governmental actors to advocate strengthened European control mechanisms. Together with several policy experts Saferworld, for example, published in 1991 and 1992 two substantial reports on the then existing national and multilateral arms control regulations and policies.³⁷ These reports assessed national and multilateral control mechanisms, and identified weaknesses and challenges facing action on the level of the European Community. They thereby provided a baseline for further activity and marked the beginning of 6 years of sustained

³⁷ See Saferworld 1991/1992.

advocacy. The aim of this advocacy was to establish an inter-governmental process that would lead to common interpretations of the Luxembourg and Lisbon criteria. Further, the lack of transparency on governmental export policies was identified as a major obstacle to achieving greater governmental restraint and responsibility in the arms trade. With the aim of initiating policy changes, Saferworld and its partners decided on a two-fold strategy.³⁸ On the governmental level, it would identify sympathetic and potentially sympathetic governments and seek to foster consensus among them so as to enhance their position on joint policy objectives. Given limited resources, it was evident that certain states would have to be prioritised. These countries included Germany, Ireland, Denmark and Holland. It also included the UK, which was included so as to “minimise opposition in at least one of the unsympathetic (and influential) governments.”³⁹ Advocacy objectives for the German presidency of the EU in 1994 included, for example:

- the generation of “an influential political constituency in favour of controls in Germany to encourage the government to play a leadership role” on arms control initiatives in the EU Council;
- the mobilisation of the Irish, Danish and Dutch governments as ““catalysers” to support/encourage the German government” in arms control initiatives; and
- the “building [of] a nucleus of cross-party support amongst the opinion-shaping community in the UK to minimise likely UK government opposition to a German initiative.”⁴⁰

By building consensus among themselves, these governments would then be on stronger grounds from which to rally other governments around their cause. In order to facilitate such consensus-building Saferworld organised several meetings with the COARM representatives of sympathetic governments to provide a forum for informal discussions. Such contact also allowed non-state actors to learn about governmental thinking on certain issues. Such access certainly remained limited. Thus, government officials will avoid divulging confidential information to non-state actors if this would be seen by their peers in other capitals as a means to strengthen their own position in intergovernmental negotiations.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the contact between non-state actors and government officials allowed NGOs to gain a better picture of governmental thinking and positions on arms export controls. The ‘insider’ access further allowed non-governmental experts and NGOs to voice the interests of their own constituencies. Government officials could also benefit through, for example, the contact with nongovernmental policy experts who could provide technical knowledge and in-depth understanding of aspects of the policy issue under discussion.⁴² Their informed

³⁸ Saferworld 1993 *Update on Saferworld’s Arms Trade Strategy* Internal document, unpublished (London: Saferworld, October 1993).

³⁹ Saferworld 1993:2.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*:3.

⁴¹ Personal communication, telephone, German COARM representative, February 2003.

⁴² Personal interviews, Bradford and London: December 2002.

opinions on the likely reception of policy initiatives among other governments further allowed governments to better judge the chances of success of a particular policy initiative. In addition, the co-operation with non-governmental actors allowed sympathetic governments to enlist transnational support for its own position on the multilateral level. This was evidenced in 1996, when the Dutch government, in preparation for its upcoming EU presidency, informally launched the idea of an EU programme to address light weapons trafficking. Being well connected with arms control and peace groups, the Dutch government could thereby affirm that it would have domestic and transnational support for its proposal.⁴³ This strengthened the position of the government in its claim that its proposal enjoyed broad public support throughout Europe.

If one aspect of the advocacy campaign on strengthened European arms control was the facilitation and support of governmental policy coalitions, the other was the generation of constituencies among parliamentarians, influential opinion formers and the greater public on the level of the EC/EU. The formation of political constituencies was seen as essential to sustained pressure and lobbying of governments, and therefore to momentum toward greater arms control. To this end, Saferworld and other UK NGOs began to liaise with, for example, high level officials in the then opposition Labour party in the British Parliament, seeking to convince them of the need for policy change on the EU level so as to counter the costs of lack of strict regulations on legal arms transfers. The generation of viable constituencies that would take up the aim of strengthened arms control and pressure their governments could be greatly advanced by establishing national processes that would regularly bring up the issue in parliamentary and public debates. To this end, Saferworld lobbied “national parliaments of target EC Member States to institute an annual debate on arms export policy”.⁴⁴

An important element within this strategy to generate nongovernmental support was the creation of a broad network of NGOs to join the call for greater national and multilateral arms export regulations. The concrete element around which such a nongovernmental network formed was the goal of a code of conduct that would achieve the aims of greater governmental restraint and responsibility, as well as of more transparency on governmental export policies. Thus, Saferworld, together with other nongovernmental organisations and two international lawyers had drawn up a model for such a code, which was formally launched in May 1995.⁴⁵ A significant element in this model for a code was the requirement of an annual consolidated report on arms exports. As explained by a participant in the policy network under discussion, the strategy behind the report was as follows: one of the main weaknesses in European arms control was the lack of transparency. The envisioned reporting mechanism under the code would drive an important wedge into the secrecy surrounding the arms

⁴³ Personal interviews, Bradford and London: December 2002.

⁴⁴ Saferworld 1993:2.

⁴⁵ Saferworld *The Case for a European Code of Conduct on the Arms Trade* Pamphlet, undated (London, Saferworld).

trade. Thus, once adopted, transnational advocacy could first be directed at making the annual consolidated report publicly available. Moreover, as states would be committed to drawing up annual national reports, transnational and domestic advocacy could then be directed toward the publication of these national reports. This then would allow domestic political constituencies to measure the export record of their governments against their commitment under the code.⁴⁶ In other words, the consolidated report would establish an important dynamic element toward greater transparency.

Notably, within two years of the launch of the model code, the policy coalition among NGOs had grown to over 600 European non-governmental organisations working on arms control, development, and human rights, or which were from religious or peace group backgrounds.⁴⁷ This growth was greatly facilitated by the circumstance that the adverse consequences of arms proliferation mobilised organisations and constituencies, which had no previous history in arms control issues. Thus, many organisations could readily accept and integrate the advocacy project proposed by a small number of NGOs and research centres focusing on arms control. The broad thematic and geographic spread of network members further meant a considerable increase in specialised knowledge about specific aspects of the arms trade, of the various national regulations and practices on arms control policies, as well as the political environment in which these policies are formulated.⁴⁸ Another strength of such a network for NGOs was the development of complementary research and advocacy strategies. Thus, NGOs coordinated their work and, insofar as the research of policy issues was concerned for example, focused on specific aspects that were not already worked on at other research centres. Cooperation between arms control research centres and large organisations such as OXFAM, Amnesty International or Save the Children was further of great benefit. Thus, these organisations have national offices throughout Europe, and can therefore mobilise constituencies to which the London-based think tanks, for example, have no direct access. By joining resources, these groups could significantly enhance the spread and potential impact of their advocacy. Thus, the network was in the position to mobilise concerted public and parliamentary pressure on various European governments to support a European code on arms transfers that was based on high common standards. This advocacy work included the lobbying of government officials, the organisation of letter-writing campaigns to politicians so as to demonstrate the importance attached to a specific policy by their electorate, the collection of signatures among the public, and the launching of media campaigns.

At the same time, however, there were also NGOs and activist groups that considered the proposed code on arms exports as fundamentally flawed and as falling considerably short of what was required of governments. In particular, it was groups arguing for a ban of the conventional arms trade, which

⁴⁶ Personal interview, London: December 2002.

⁴⁷ Further members of this network, not treated here, include members of national parliaments and the European Parliament as well as several eminent persons such as Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, politicians, trade union representatives and academics. See: Saferworld *The Case...:2*.

⁴⁸ Personal interview, London: December 2002.

voiced their criticism. It was argued that the envisioned code was insufficient as it failed to make arms supplies “to countries outside Europe ... nothing but a rare exception”.⁴⁹ Consequently, it was in countries with strong pacifist traditions such as Germany, the UK and the Netherlands, where criticism by other non-governmental groups was the most pronounced. Such criticism weakened transnational advocacy on the code as it created the image of a much divided civil society.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, such criticism remained limited and arms ban NGOs abstained from actively boycotting the campaign for a code of conduct.

It was against this background that, in 1996/97, there developed considerable transnational momentum in support of the proposed code. Importantly, such momentum was also developing in the British parliament, where Saferworld and its partners had sought to build up political backing for tighter arms control. Crucially, Labour showed sympathy toward the aim of a code and, as early as February 1997, then shadow foreign secretary Cook made a public electoral pledge to pursue such a code. This then meant that, when coming to power in the UK and taking over the EU presidency, the new government could engage in a policy initiative it could be certain to be supported by large sections of its own electorate, as well as by several other governments and publics across Europe. It also meant that there was now a clear window of opportunity for like-minded governments and non-state actors to generate political and public support to reach a governmental consensus on a European code on arms transfers. The policy coalition between governments and NGOs did not, of course, imply the absence of considerable differences on certain policy issues between such actors. Thus, only a few governments shared the aim of NGOs to establish a code of conduct that would impose legal obligations on governments to fulfil the criteria of the code. Nor was there much governmental support for the creation of multilateral, as opposed to the eventually adopted bilateral, consultation mechanisms under a code. Even the positions between Saferworld and its partners on the one hand, and of the British government position on the other, diverged considerably on occasions. For example, Saferworld lobbied vigorously in the public for a strong document on high common standards and sought to put the British government under pressure by campaigning against the watering down in intergovernmental negotiations of the export criteria as found in the model code of conduct. Indeed, such advocacy led to the complaint of the British Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Office that Saferworld was undermining the government’s position both at home and on the EU level.⁵¹ Despite such differences though, the policy coalition among like-minded governments and NGOs succeeded in the campaign for a Code of Conduct, and therewith in the establishment of a control regime that includes the mentioned dynamic aspect of annual national reports and reviews of its implementation.

⁴⁹ Letter by the German *Kampagne gegen Ruestungsexport* to Saferworld, quoted in Davis 1999:168.

⁵⁰ Personal interview, London: December 02.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Analysis

Given the above account of transnational advocacy on strengthened arms control, what then has been the particular contribution of non-state actors to the creation of the European regime on conventional weapons in general, and small arms in particular? Certainly transnational advocacy in Europe had important roles to play in the processes of issue identification and awareness raising concerning small arms proliferation and the broader field of lack of controls on the conventional weapons trade. Thus, one success of non-state actors was the inclusion of small arms on the agendas of governments and multilateral organisations. Apart from this often acknowledged role of NGOs in agenda setting though, transnational advocacy in Europe made a significant contribution to the emergence and work of intergovernmental policy coalitions. First, with respect to the campaign on a European code of conduct, nongovernmental organisations have been critical in preparing the ground for the initiative of the new Labour government during its presidency of the EU in 1998. Finding sympathetic allies among front bench opposition members, the liaising of NGOs and Labour officials allowed for the establishment of a developed policy project on a code if Labour were to win the British elections. As one involved nongovernmental participant in this British policy network explains: the work that had already been done in formulating a policy project “meant that when (Labour) came to power, they were in a position to move quickly with a clear agenda. If the plan hadn’t existed, I don’t think Labour would have tabled the Code during their presidency” of the EU.⁵² Thus, non-state actors can surely be seen as having significantly contributed to the creation of the Code of Conduct. Second, non-state actors contributed to the formation of governmental coalitions. Of particular importance here are the mentioned workshops and seminars organised by NGOs for government officials of potentially sympathetic states. Such meetings with COARM officials could extend over several days and allowed for the first time for debates and joint problem solving exercises outside the formal structures of negotiations in the official meetings. Further, the absence of officials from governments that were opposed to greater multilateral efforts meant that joint interests and positions could be developed more freely. Thus, in the view of one participating nongovernmental expert, the importance of these informal meetings was that “it allowed for ‘open’ thinking - rather than trotting out government positions.”⁵³

In addition, I hold that, in such a c-cooperative environment, one of the biggest contributions of NGOs to the creation of the European arms regime was to convince government officials of the feasibility and viability of policy initiatives on certain issues. To elaborate, it would seem fair to say that bureaucrats are often more conservative in their estimates on what is possible on the political level than non-state actors. This clearly limits the willingness of officials to support ideas and policy projects they consider as highly unlikely to be accepted by other member states. For example, NGOs

⁵² Personal communication, e-mail, December 2002.

⁵³ Ibid.

faced considerable scepticism in many capitals when the model code of conduct was first launched by NGOs. It was a further success of non-state actors to convince sympathetic officials of the feasibility of promoting the adoption of a code. On a broader level, non-state actors succeeded, in particular, in convincing officials that measures on conventional and small arms control needed to be based on a dynamic process, that is, a process that allowed for the continuing co-operation of governments on relevant issues and for debates in parliaments and the general public. This strategic vision of non-state actors has found its expression in the current arms regime through the annual reviews of the implementation of the EU policy instruments on arms control. These dynamic foundations are important as they provide for mechanisms for governments to continue working towards common interpretations and applications of policies, as well as to identify further issues that should be put on the agenda of relevant governmental working groups. The strategic vision of NGOs with regards to creating greater transparency is also reflected in the annual reports on arms exports under the Code of Conduct. Some governmental allies for the inclusion of such a requirement were evident. Sweden, for example, has published national reports on arms exports since the 1980s. Other governments such as that of France were, however, strongly opposed to such reports, or at least to their publication outside diplomatic channels. By convincing sympathetic governments that, at a minimum, a confidential consolidated EU report should be included in the Code of Conduct, NGOs had made an important first step in achieving greater transparency. Moreover, the strategy of requiring national annual reports to be drawn up under the Code has eventually paid off as, mentioned previously, the majority of EU governments publish reports on their arms exports by now.⁵⁴ This then also allowed for the envisioned regular national debates on governmental arms export and arms control policies. Indeed, even those NGOs, which are critical of the Code of Conduct for failing to ban most weapons exports, seem to welcome the publication of national reports. Thus, albeit seriously limited by continuing secrecy, the annual reports allow for better monitoring of governmental export policies than was possible before.

In short, I hold that non-state actors were clearly of consequence in the creation of the European arms regime. Thus, by identifying issues, raising awareness and mobilising support among governments and civil societies, non-state actors made important contributions to the setting of national and multilateral agendas. Significantly, non-state actors greatly facilitated the building of governmental policy coalitions and, in the process, could convince governmental officials of the importance and viability of certain policy aspects. In my view then, it was the particular contribution of NGOs to the European arms regime that this regime is based on dynamic mechanisms that allow for continuing

⁵⁴ Interesting in this context is the turn around in the French position toward the publication of both the consolidated EU report on arms exports as well as of the publication of a national arms export report. While the reasons for this change are not clear at present, it is presumably the result of peer pressure on France from the other two 'big' European players, both of which publish their national arms export reports. Personal interview, London: December 2002.

governmental negotiations on greater convergence of their arms policies and for greater public transparency.

Conclusion

This paper began by pointing towards the emergence in the 1990s of policy networks that formed around new security threats. It asked whether the increasing prominence of non-state actors in such policy coalitions provides evidence for a trend toward the governance of arms control in Europe, that is, whether there has been a shift in authority in the policy process away from governments and toward non-state actors. As the last section of the paper argued, there are certainly grounds for arguing that non-state actors have been of consequence in the creation of the European small arms regime, and, in particular, in the adoption of an EU Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers. Specifically, non-state actors could facilitate the emergence of, and contribute to, governmental policy coalitions, and, within this context, insist on the inclusion of certain dynamic elements in the European regime. Non-state actors thus played a significant role in ‘winning coalitions’ that promoted strengthened arms control among EU governments and publics. However, in itself, such participation in winning coalitions does not substantiate the claim that there is a trend towards governance. Thus, as the second section of this paper argued, the European arms regime is the outcome of, above all else, the intergovernmental policy competition that took place throughout the 1990s with regard to arms control. Moreover, while non-state actors can encourage governments to champion certain causes, governmental leadership is clearly not dependent on transnational advocacy. Thus, neither the adoption of the Luxembourg and Lisbon criteria in 1991/92, nor of the Programme on Illicit Trafficking or of the Joint Action on Small Arms were prepared by targeted non-state actor activity. In addition, even governments that are generally sympathetic to the aims of NGOs calling for stronger arms control put clear limits to the aims they are willing to pursue. Thus, although most EU member states by now publish annual reports on arms exports, these reports are still providing considerably less detailed information than called for by NGOs. Also, NGOs have been arguing repeatedly for the establishment of prior parliamentary scrutiny of arms export licenses. Such demands have so far fallen on deaf ears even among those governments closely cooperating with non-state actors on other aspects of arms control.⁵⁵ In short then, although non-state actors have played important roles in the creation of the EU regime on arms, governmental interests and governmental leadership have remained key to achieving policy change on the level of the EU. It is for these reasons that, in my reading, there is not sufficient evidence for claiming a shift towards the governance of European arms control.

⁵⁵ See, for example, Haug, M., Langvandslie, M., Lumpe, L. and Marsh, N. (2002) *Shining a Light on Small Arms Exports: The Record of State Transparency*, Small Arms Survey and the Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers: Occasional Paper No.4 (January 2002).

Where then are useful avenues for further research on the role of non-state actors in the European arms regime? Many assumptions made in this paper evidently need a more thorough investigation. Also, it would be worth looking at the current funding structures underlying non-state actor activity on small arms in more detail, and to assess in how far such activity might be sustainable should private and governmental funds for small arms reduce. Thus, given the new salience of terrorism on international security agendas, there are already indications that funding for small arms projects is becoming harder to secure. If this turns out to be the case, it is just to assume that many NGOs will have to limit or end altogether their work on small arms issues. Further, with a view to reassessing the claim of governance in the European arms regime, the inclusion of constructivist concerns about the role of non-state actors as carriers of ideas that are transforming the nature and scope of international debates on security would be worth exploring. It might indeed be in this direction that one can find the most substantial evidence for non-state actor influence on the way in which European governments address security concerns. Such research might assist in formulating advocacy strategies that have greater impact on the political level. Given the devastating human suffering caused by the proliferation and misuse of small arms, such research also seems desirable.