

ARMS CONTROL IN THE THIRD WORLD

by

HANS RATTINGER

Department of Political Science at the University of Freiburg

I. Introduction

Unlike disarmament, which aims at stage-by-stage reduction of military machines within the framework of a pacific world society, the concept of arms control proceeds from the assumption that military power will continue to be important in international relations. According to a well known definition, arms control means the cooperative regulation of armaments potentials with the goal of stability¹. "Stability" here means that the parties to arms control agreements are less prone to becoming involved in arms races and that relationships of military strength render any resort to military action, in times of crisis, less attractive².

The idea of arms control evolved within the context of the post-World War II East-West confrontation, and to some extent represents an attempt to make the system of mutual deterrence more reliable³. Arms control has come to stay in relations between the two large military blocs, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, and this is not only on account of the results already accomplished⁴, but also the institutions meanwhile established⁵. Of course there are quite different judgements as to the success or failure so far of arms control processes in East-West relations, but this topic cannot be further examined here⁶.

Scholarly concern with problems of arms control was for a long time confined almost exclusively to the area of nuclear strategy. Work had been done on arms control at American universities well before talks on

Author's address: Prof. Dr. H. Rattinger, Seminar für wissenschaftliche Politik der Universität Freiburg, Werdering 18, D-7800 Freiburg i. Br.

the limitation of strategic weapons systems (SALT) began⁷. But in the area of tactical nuclear weapons and the balance of conventional forces in Europe, the process was practically reversed. The Vienna troop reduction negotiations between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, begun in 1973, go back to political initiatives from the late 1960's; yet intensive scholarly concern with this subfield of arms control only began to catch up after some delay⁸.

Least attention of all was paid to questions of arms control outside the central confrontation between the two advanced industrialized military blocs. When arms control in the Third World was subjected to scholarly analysis at all, it was largely within the area of nuclear proliferation⁹. Even today, the control of *conventional* arms in the Third World remains for the most part a blank space on the map of arms control. This applies both to reality, e. g. the activities of the relevant international organizations, and to scholarly research. It is the object of this paper to report on the first steps towards charting this new territory, although, in view of the paucity of appropriate studies, more questions will surely be raised than can be answered. Three broad problem areas will be examined: 1. Why should the concept of conventional arms control be transferred to the Third World? And is the control of conventional armaments in the Third World even desirable? 2. How, and by what means, can arms control be effected in the Third World? 3. Who, which actors, could introduce and implement conventional arms control in the Third World?

The first two questions address the purposes and goals of conventional arms control in the Third World: for which ends, on the one hand, can it be used instrumentally, and on the other hand, which operational goal formulations seem feasible and useful? Before entering into all this, however, some observations must be made about a few central trends in the arming of the Third World, trends which have to be considered in order to establish a basis for a grounded discussion of the topic.

II. *Trends in the Armament of the Third World*

The growth of armaments potential in the Third World, because they started from a lower initial level, is taking place at a substantially faster rate than in the developed industrial states. Between 1963 and 1977, real annual armaments expenditures of the Third World states more than doubled (see Table 1), while in the same period the real armaments outlays of all developed states increased only by barely one-fourth¹⁰. Thus today the developing countries account for about one-quarter of all resources expended for military purposes throughout the world, which con-

Table 1 – *Arms Expenditure, Imports and Personnel Strengths*

	1963	1970	1977	% change	
				1963-70	1970-77
<i>Developed Countries</i>					
Arms expenditures (bill.)	258	296	319	14.7	7.8
Arms expenditures per soldier (thsd.)	22.5	28.5	30.1	11.8	5.6
Arms expenditures/GNP (%)	8.5	6.6	5.6		
Arms imports (bill.)	3.2	2.6	3.7	-18.8	42.3
Arms imports/arms expenditures (%)	1.2	0.9	1.2		
Soldiers (mill.)	10.1	10.4	10.6	3.0	1.9
Soldiers/population (%)	11.1	10.5	10.1		
<i>Third World</i>					
Arms expenditures (bill.)	43	64	92	48.8	43.8
= % of world arms expenditures	14.3	17.8	22.4		
Arms expenditures/GNP (%)	4.4	6.1	5.9		
Arms expenditures per soldier (thsd.)	4.0	4.6	5.9	15.0	28.3
Arms imports (bill.)	3.8	6.1	13.0	60.5	113.1
Arms imports/arms expenditures (%)	8.8	9.5	14.1		
Arms imports/imports (%)	5.8	6.2	5.2		
Indigenous arms production incl. licence production (bill.)	0.2	0.5	1.0	150	100
Soldiers (mill.)	10.7	13.8	15.6	29.0	13.0
= % of world military personnel	51.4	57.0	59.5		
Soldiers/population (‰)	4.8	4.9	4.9		
<i>Third World Excluding Middle East</i>					
Arms expenditures (bill.)	39	55	66	41.0	20.0
= % of world arms expenditures	13.0	15.3	16.1		
Arms expenditures/GNP (%)	4.3	5.8	4.9		
Arms expenditures per soldier (thsd.)	3.9	4.4	4.7	12.8	6.8
Arms imports (bill.)	2.9	4.2	6.4	44.8	52.4
Arms imports/arms expenditures (%)	7.4	7.6	9.7		
Arms imports/imports (%)	5.1	4.9	5.2		
Soldiers (mill.)	10.0	12.6	14.1	26.0	11.9
= % of world military personnel	48.1	52.1	53.8		
Soldiers/population (‰)	4.6	4.8	4.6		

Source: USACDA, *World Military and Arms Transfers*, Washington, D. C., various editions; for Third World arms production: SIPRI Yearbook 1979.

All statistics based on constant US \$ (1976).

trasts with about one-seventh at the beginning of the 1960's. Toward the end of the 1970's armaments expenditure as a percentage of the gross national product of both groups of nations was about the same, whereas at the beginning of the 1960's the developed nations' percentage had been

twice that of the developing countries. This quantitative rise in Third World armaments can be seen in the size of their armed forces (Table 1). Military personnel numbers in the developed industrial world have remained nearly constant for the past 20 years; in the Third World, five million additional persons put on uniform between 1963 and 1977. Hence six of every ten soldiers in the world are now members of developing countries' armed forces.

Parallel to this quantitative growth, considerable *qualitative* improvements can be observed in the military arsenals of the developing countries. The spread of modern military technology to the Third World can be seen above all in increased Third World possession of advanced weapons systems such as supersonic fighter aircraft, missile systems, tanks and modern warships (Tables 2 and 3).

This diffusion of technologically sophisticated weapons systems, documented in Tables 2 and 3, has three characteristics relevant to arms

Table 2 - *Number of Developing Countries in Possession of Certain Weapons Systems (in parentheses: excluding Middle East)*

	1950	1960	1970	1977
Supersonic combat aircraft	- (-)	1 (1)	28 (19)	47 (37)
Missile systems	- (-)	6 (5)	25 (17)	42 (34)
Armoured vehicles	1 (1)	38 (29)	72 (60)	83 (71)
Warships launched after 1945	4 (3)	26 (21)	56 (48)	67 (45)

Source: SIPRI Yearbook 1978.

Table 3 - *Arms Deliveries to the Third World, by Region, Cumulative 1973-1977*

Region	Tanks, Self-propelled guns, Armoured vehicles		Surface combatants, Submarines, Guided Missile Patrol Boats		Supersonic Combat Aircraft		Total value of all deliveries 1973 to 1977, in current dollars (bill.)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Value	%
Middle East	19,644	53	148	25	1,614	51	23.8	49
Africa	6,083	16	114	19	578	18	7.7	16
Latin America	2,198	6	163	28	168	5	3.6	7
Asia and Oceania	9,241	25	166	28	821	26	13.4	28
Totals	37,166	100	591	100	3,181	100	48.5	100

Source: USACDA, *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1967-1977*, Washington, D. C., 1979.

control. First, it is for the greatest part dependent on imports, i. e., is the result of *proliferation* rather than indigenous production¹¹. If one starts from the assumption that by far most of the arms imports financially enumerated in Table 1 are weapons, and if one then compares the volume of imports to that of indigenous production, it is evident that the Third World must still import its arms at the rate of over 90 per cent. Hence conventional arms transfers are of crucial significance to arms control in the Third World. Second – and this is not evident from the tables – the time is long past when weapons deliveries to the Third World consisted overwhelmingly of the industrial nations' obsolete stocks. Today the states of the Third World are demanding primarily modern, factory-fresh weapons systems rather than being content with used and outdated material¹². Third – and again, not evident from the tables – weapons aid and arms deliveries within the framework of particularly favourable credit arrangements are playing an ever smaller part in comparison to quite normal commercial transactions¹³. Nowadays this latter category includes over 90 per cent of all arms deliveries to developing countries. This means that the relationship between buyers and suppliers fundamentally changed during the 1970's. If developing countries formerly came, as it were, as supplicants in search of industrial nations who would be prepared to allow them to buy weapons at the most favourable terms and conditions possible – preferably as part of aid programmes – and if they not infrequently were constrained to pay the price in the form of political loyalty, then today the situation has been reversed. For many developing countries the international market these days is a buyer's market in which they can keep a lookout for favourable opportunities and play off suppliers against each other¹⁴. Of course this is particularly so in the case of those developing countries in possession of sought-after raw materials who, with the rise in raw materials prices, have been freed from the balance of payments difficulties once characteristic of all developing countries.

This last point should however not be taken to mean that the just-mentioned trends in the arming of the Third World – namely quantitative and qualitative increases, high import dependency and transformation into a buyer's market – affect primarily the Middle East, where high conflict potentials coincide, in a single region, with an enormous increase in disposable resources. In order to counter this impression, Table 1 presents all values of arms expenditures, military personnel strengths, arms imports, etc. for all the states of the world excluding those of the Middle East. It is then evident that, although the developments described above are especially pronounced in the Middle East, which pushes up the aggregate statistics, they can also be observed in lesser intensity in the rest of the

developing world. The expansion and modernization of the military apparatus and the crucial role of conventional arms transfers are *not* confined to the Middle East.

III. *Why Arms Control in the Third World?*

The fact that the Third World represents a potential area for the implementation of arms control has been illustrated in the preceding survey of present arms trends. To mention arms control and the Third World in the same breath is obviously something different from prescribing prohibition to anti-alcoholics. On the other hand, a rapid quantitative and qualitative expansion of military armaments in the Third World is not *per se* a reason for calling for arms control, unless of course one adopts a consistently pacifist standpoint. Why then, and in whose interest, would it be worthwhile to strive for arms control in the Third World?

Many arguments speak in favour of limiting armaments in the Third World; however it is not possible to discuss each of these arguments in detail here. From the viewpoint of the weapons suppliers – whose willingness to supply makes the arming of the developing countries possible in the first place – one might object to the part they play in the spread of the machinery of repression. In this way, the suppliers' acts hinder the realization of human rights, as President Carter acknowledged, at least verbally, at the beginning of his term of office¹⁵. From the same point of view, one can also regard the limitation of the military armament of the Third World as a contribution towards the prevention of military adventurism in these regions of the world, or as an attempt to avoid supplier involvement in local conflicts. The importance of the latter argument is particularly evident if one bears in mind that, according to plans in existence until the overthrow of the Shah, roughly 150,000 American military advisers were to assist the Iranian army until 1980 in absorbing the supermodern weapons systems which had already been ordered¹⁶. Only in a quantitative respect is Iran a crass and extreme case. This problem arises in many developing countries, though in numerically less significant terms, when the delivery of complex weapons systems forces the supplier to station personnel in the recipient country for lengthy periods.

In the following I will set aside these and related arguments and instead confine myself to two classical goals of arms control, namely safeguarding peace and economic retrenchment¹⁷. First, on securing peace and avoiding conflict: the stockpiling of weapons does not necessarily lead to war. The entire modern theory of deterrence assumes that this is not the case¹⁸.

Deterrence theory does, however, presuppose a saturation of nuclear weapons potentials, which of course does not exist in the Third World. Thus one certainly cannot start from the assumption that the military armament of developing countries will play the primary role of securing peace. On the contrary, the intensity of military conflicts in the Third World depends in any case on the extent of arms previously stockpiled. Whether this stockpiling of military material itself makes the violent enactment of conflicts more or less probable, cannot be decided *a priori*. Rather, this probability depends on the development of local constellations of forces and the nature of the arms stockpiling, e. g., on the regional significance of offensive or defensive weapons systems.

From this it follows that arms control in the Third World can be implemented with a double purpose in mind: one, for the military stabilization of certain regions – i. e., for reducing the attractiveness of military solutions to regional conflicts – and two, for limiting the scope of damage in the event that regional conflicts are nevertheless enacted militarily. Whether or not these two goals will actually be achieved, depends above all on whether the arms control measures adopted are tailored to the local and regional problems which are produced by the structure of the military forces, the armament processes and the lines of conflict. The goal of regional stabilization via arms control is especially relevant, since the Third World is replete with tensions and conflicts in which the deployment of military power is far more conceivable than in European conflicts, which occur under the neutralizing umbrella of nuclear stalemate. The Third World today is made up of some 130 individual nation-states. According to statistics published a few years ago, of 244 international conflicts between 1945 and 1974, 84 per cent took place between developing countries¹⁹. These facts lend considerable weight to the thesis that concrete steps toward arms control would probably produce a substantial stabilizing effect.

The *economic* argument for conventional arms control in the Third World has repeatedly been the subject of controversial debates which in some ways are reminiscent of religious wars²⁰. Again and again one hears the argument that the Third World is after all made up of developing nations for whom nothing is more important than economic growth. Military expenditures, however, clearly retard these states' economic growth. This point of view was urgently expounded again in 1978 in an expert report on problems of disarmament prepared for the Special General Assembly of the United Nations²¹. The problem with this view is that it presents very little empirical evidence on the connection between armaments and economic growth in the Third World, and the available

evidence contradicts that very same view. The most comprehensive empirical investigation into this connection was published by Emile Benoit under the title *Defense and Economic Growth in Developing Countries*²². Benoit, in a cross-sectional longitudinal study based on aggregate data, reports that in Third World states arms expenditures' share of the gross national product is positively correlated with the growth of the non-military GNP. Benoit interprets these results to mean that the growth effects produced by arms expenditures are greater than the growth effects which could have been achieved had the same resources been used in alternative ways. The reason for this phenomenon, he believes, is that in developing countries resources diverted from armaments are not channelled into, say, highly productive investments, but into consumption or social investments (e. g., housing construction). Benoit's calculations rest upon data from the years 1950–1964. I have attempted to reproduce his calculations using corresponding values from 1968 to 1978, and have arrived at results whose direction, though not intensity, correspond to Benoit's.

While trying to reproduce Benoit's findings in the context of the 1970's, I came, in my final calculations, to a somewhat different result, which will be described briefly. I noticed that latitudinally, across all developing countries and across all regions, per capita arms expenditures and per capita outflows for education and health care were positively correlated, which must be interpreted as tending to agree with the results reported by Benoit. But I also noticed that all three quantities – namely per capita arms expenditures and per capita outflows for education and the health system – were very highly correlated with the per capita gross national product and therefore could be traced back to the common factor of level of economic development. If, by means of appropriate statistical procedures (partial correlations), one excludes the simultaneous effect of the prosperity factor, "gross national product per capita", on the scope of arms expenditures and social programmes, then in the developing countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia the correlations between arms expenditures on the one hand and per capita expenditures for education and health systems on the other, are reversed and in fact become negative. Only in the Middle East region is the positive relationship sustained. What all this means is that arms expenditures in the Third World are indeed not an obstacle to growth; but when levels of affluence and development are held constant, such expenditures are made to the detriment of the social budget. On the basis of these empirical results, which in cross-sectional data from various years have proved to be highly stable, it appears possible, despite Benoit's conclusions, to advocate that arms control in the Third World is desirable in terms of economic goals, namely the

reordering of resource priorities to favour the social budgets of developing countries.

IV. How can Arms Control be Realized in the Third World?

Starting from the assumption that arms control in the Third World can be demonstrated to be a useful enterprise in terms of the interests of both developing countries and the industrial nations, we now come to the second question: how can it in fact be realized? In order to keep the size of this essay within reasonable bounds, let us select only a very few from among the many theoretically possible goals of arms control. Limitations on military force strengths, on armaments budgets and on certain weapons systems as well as confidence-building measures²³, such as have been discussed in the context of the CSCE or the Vienna troop reduction negotiations, could all be applied in the Third World as well. To be sure, transplanting these measures into the situation of the developing countries will not solve a single one of the problems associated with these arms control goals²⁴. Force strengths alone are increasingly considered to be a militarily less relevant and therefore not particularly interesting criterion of arms control²⁵. Much the same applies to the fixing of armaments budgets, so long as the internationally agreed upon and standardized bookkeeping system for military expenditures remains a theoretical piece of expert planning without concrete prospects of realization²⁶. Setting upper limits on certain weapons systems immediately provokes discussions about assigning weights to quantity and quality. The significance which could ultimately attach to confidence-building measures in the Third World, outside of regions with a particularly high conflict intensity, has still to be thoroughly examined.

Apart from the arms control mechanism just described, which are well known in East-West arms control, there is an additional point of departure for the Third World which relates to the pre-eminent role that conventional arms transfers play in its armaments process²⁷. The developing countries' indigenous arms production, despite the rapid growth in their manufacturing capacities, does not account, in terms of financial volume, for even one-tenth of their annual arms acquisitions. Although more and more developing countries possess the capacity to maintain their own armaments industries, for the great majority of these nations this in the short and middle term will involve only indigenous production of small weapons and munitions, and eventually the final assembly, under licence, of simpler equipment such as small propeller-driven aircraft²⁸. A very large number of developing countries today are not yet in a position to

carry out even the servicing of complicated weapons systems, e. g., combat tanks, without assistance from foreign experts²⁹. When these experts are wanting, the affected equipment quickly loses its deployment capacity. To be able to construct and produce the most complex and prestigious weapons systems – such as combat tanks, combat aircraft and missile-bearing surface ships – is today the privilege of only a few nations in the Third World (People's Republic of China, India, Israel, South Africa, Brazil), and no crucial changes in this situation are likely to take place by the end of this century³⁰.

What this means is that the transfer of conventional weapons – and, to an increasing extent, probably the transfer of production units and licences as well – is the pivot and hinge of Third World armament and therefore of arms control in this part of the world³¹. The question must thus be asked as to just how these transfers of weapons systems – enhanced, in future, by production licences – can be managed in such a way as to allow for the aims of releasing resources for other purposes, stabilizing certain regions, and avoiding the involvement of the supplier in regional conflicts.

An initial and modest approach would be to make all such shipments and transfers public. This could be done by means of obligatory registration with an agency provided for this purpose, perhaps under the auspices of the United Nations³². Such proposals have been sporadically put before the United Nations, but have always met with firm rejection by most of the developing countries, who see any such provisions as discriminatory if all forms of arms production are not simultaneously made subject to compulsory registration³³. A second, and also very modest, step could be a more stringent control over the ultimate destination of armaments supplied to the Third World. Secondary sales of weapons systems within the Third World quite obviously undermine the goal of stabilizing certain recipient regions. Negotiations toward agreements which would provide that arms transfers may only take place subject to an absolute ban on their being transmitted to third parties, might provide a corrective here. Developing countries wanting to replace their weapons systems could be encouraged, with a buyback guarantee from the supplier, to adhere to agreements of this kind³⁴.

The decisive goal of arms control, however, is not an improved scrutability of deliveries and ultimate recipients, but the *limitation* of arms transfers. Such limitations are conceivable in several variations. The most plausible of these are, on the one hand, the fixing of upper financial limits on deliveries to certain regions, possibly with a breakdown for each of the individual states in the region concerned; and on the other hand, prohibitions of deliveries of certain weapons to certain regions³⁵. Which

weapons systems should be affected by the ban will depend, surely, on the respective region. For some regions it will be appropriate to prohibit at least the delivery of so-called dual-capability weapons systems, i. e., weapons systems which can carry both conventional and nuclear weapons. In other regions, however, a distinction between offensive and defensive systems could prove useful, however fluid the boundary between them may be. In specific, concrete cases it might perhaps be possible to achieve agreement that radar, monitoring and reconnaissance systems, or precision anti-tank weapons, are less suited to offensive roles than are fighter-bomber aircraft or tanks.

V. *Who ought to, and can, bring about Arms Control in the Third World?*

After discussing the “why” and “how” we now arrive at our last question, namely *who* can and ought to conduct arms control in the Third World. According to the view just presented, arms control must be pre-eminently the control of arms deliveries. Accordingly, the following discussion will not consider which actors might be involved in other arms control measures in the Third World. Conventional arms transfers, which I will examine more precisely here, could be limited and controlled by unilateral measures on the part of certain recipient countries, by regional agreements among recipient countries, by global accords and by steps taken by supplier nations.

Any unilateral reticence on the part of developing countries to import modern military technology may, for all practical purposes, be discounted³⁶. Modern weapons have a considerable prestige value for the young states of the Third World. Besides, their armament level, despite all the quantitative and qualitative expansion of recent years, remains so low that even minute arms imports can make a military difference locally. To consider the basic balance of power as not affected by a few hundred tanks is a great luxury which developing countries cannot afford.

Regional agreements among developing countries thus in principle seem substantially better suited to limiting the demand for conventional arms transfers. The preconditions for such arrangements are a certain regional identity and a common interest in arms control³⁷. While in some cases a start may be made from an existing basis of regional identity, most regions in the Third World have never had the experience necessary to develop motives for arms control. For they may not be aware that arms and advanced armaments are a bottomless pit and that constant attempts to fill it only seldom lead to an increase in objective security. Some regions of the world

– Korea for example, the Indian subcontinent perhaps, and some states in the Middle East – are surely no strangers to this experience. Otherwise, however, one can as a rule only start from economic motivations for regional reduction of the demand for armaments, and such considerations may well come off second best when weighed against factors of national security and national prestige.

The sole example of this kind of regional initiative toward arms control in the Third World was the December 1974 Ayacucho Declaration³⁸, and its fate is a clear message: in this declaration, the heads of state of eight Latin American states (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Columbia, Panama, Peru, Venezuela) announced their intention to create conditions which would permit effective arms limitation in Latin America in the interests of economic and social development as well as the renunciation of acquisitions of weapons systems for offensive purposes. But there has been no change at all in the growth of the armaments budgets of these eight states since their joint declaration and indeed, five of them have meanwhile added supersonic aircraft to their air forces.

Still fewer effects on the Third World may be expected from global approaches to arms control. Subjects of United Nations' deliberations such as universal and complete disarmament, world disarmament conferences, disarmament decades or regional peace zones lack any significance for concrete, regional, conventional arms control. At the United Nations, partly at the behest of the developing countries, top priority has been accorded to nuclear disarmament and arms control. Meagre initiatives toward the central registration of conventional arms transfers have been nipped in the bud³⁹. The substantial negotiations of the Geneva Disarmament Committee of the United Nations ultimately survive on the basis of agreements which the two superpowers are able to reach outside this body⁴⁰.

The only remaining actors in the control of international arms transfers to the Third World, therefore, are the arms suppliers. They can be motivated to exercise restraint in their deliveries by their desire to stabilize the regions of the Third World, to avoid being drawn into the latter's conflicts, and to facilitate the developing countries' redeployment of scarce resources for non-military uses. However, several factors militate *against* the producers' cutting back on their provision of weapons systems: their economic self-interest, the state of the international arms market and their desire to assure themselves of political influence and dependency by arms deliveries. The latter motive will be played down in the following discussion, since its significance has drastically declined with the commercialization of arms exports to the Third World⁴¹.

Among the economic aspects of arms exports to the Third World, one might note the motives of protecting jobs, improving balances of payments and reducing the costs of one's own arms programme by extending production series⁴². All these arguments today can no longer simply be accepted as self-evident. Arms exports' effect on employment has been frequently overestimated. According to a recent estimate by the Congressional Budget Office, annual arms exports of one billion dollars secure roughly 40,000 jobs⁴³. The world-wide employment effect of arms exports to the Third World is thus only somewhat more than half a million jobs. France and Great Britain, the two most important Western European arms exporters, each stand to lose less than 50,000 jobs, and a specific concentration in the aeronautical, electronics and steel industries is of course out of the question. If one assumes that the control of arms transfers to the Third World does not mean stopping them completely, and further that Third World military imports will be at least partially replaced by non-military imports, then one must consider the potentially negative employment effect of arms control as marginal. A similar judgement may be made concerning the balance of payments effect. Arms transfers to the Third World represent for the United States about 3 per cent, for Great Britain and France roughly one-half of one per cent, of their total exports⁴⁴. And the argument that arms exports to the oil producing countries could balance out the oil price increases of recent years (recycling) is not very tenable. The value of the United States' oil imports in 1977 and 1978 was more than ten times as great as that of arms exports to the entire Third World.

The argument, finally, that extending production series reduces unit costs of some armaments programmes is one which applies almost exclusively to middle powers such as France and Great Britain who export a substantial share of their arms production to developing countries. We shall return to this problem presently, in the context of the structure of the international arms market.

A further argument against the feasibility of arms control in the Third World carried out by the suppliers of weapons systems stems from the structure of the international arms market. More and more, as was already explained, it is turning into a buyer's market. In a market of this kind, the prevailing maxim is: "If we don't supply, others will." Does this mean that the control by the suppliers of conventional arms transfers to the Third World has no prospect of success?

The competition among various sellers must be interpreted in terms of rivalries, both between East and West, and among the Western industrial nations. If one discounts the possibility of an agreement with the Soviet Union on limiting conventional arms deliveries to the Third World⁴⁵, this

on no account means that the Soviet Union and its allies would fill every gap created by cancelled Western deliveries. Although the Soviet Union and its allies provide about one-third of all arms materiel delivered to the developing countries, their customers are primarily nations already dependent on the Eastern Bloc for the great majority of their arms imports, who for this reason are hardly potential customers of Western military technology in any event. On the other hand, there are a number of developing countries in the Third World who in principle reject military materiel from the Eastern Bloc. This is so, not only because of their ideological aversion to communism or fear of becoming dependent, but from very practical considerations involving the technological standards of Eastern armaments, the East's incapacity or unwillingness to combine arms deliveries with appropriate training and infrastructural programmes, and the unavailability of spare parts. The patterns of supplier-buyer relations in arms trade with the Third World to a certain extent reflect the bloc structure of bipolarity⁴⁶. If the Western Alliance were to consider it useful not to make certain weapons deliveries to certain regions in the Third World, this would not necessarily mean driving the states concerned into the arms of the Soviet Union.

About two-thirds of arms deliveries to developing countries come from the Western industrial nations. Competition among these purveyors, especially the United States, Great Britain and France, is at least as intense as that between East and West. One can hardly count on agreements about the goal of arms control in the Third World patterned after the London Suppliers' Club for Nuclear Technology. Although unilateral supplier restrictions on the part of the largest supplier were announced by President Carter, words were not followed up by deeds⁴⁷. Does this mean that no future opportunities exist for the control of armaments in the Third World via the most plausible means, *viz.*, restraint on the part of the Western purveyors?

Although this answer is not implausible, it is by no means compelling. Competition among western producers for the arms markets of the Third World is a consequence of the attempt to maintain several quasi-autarchical armaments industries within the Western Alliance. This state of affairs is anachronistic, not because of its consequences to the control of arms transfers, but rather because of the Alliance's own interests. Considering the probable conflict scenarios in the nuclear age, comprehensive national armaments industries are dispensable. For this reason, all the experts have long regarded arms standardization within NATO as the major requirement of a joint defence system. This is so far a number of military and economic reasons, which cannot be discussed in detail here⁴⁸. For the

moment we are interested only in the consequences to the limitation of conventional arms deliveries to the Third World if arms standardization becomes one of the main topics of the Western Alliance in the 1980's – which is very probable. Arms standardization would mean the undermining of the argument in favour of the extension of production series by means of arms exports to developing countries, since production for the entire Alliance would be done according to the division of labour principle. Naturally, this would not altogether eliminate the attractiveness of supplementary export deliveries, but such additional exports would no longer be vital to the technological basis of the smaller producers. Arms standardization within NATO – quite apart from all the advantages to the Alliance itself which it would entail – represents the only realistic possibility of restoring the international arms market to a seller's market, at least as far as two important groups are concerned: those developing countries that recoil from arms deliveries from the Eastern Bloc and the qualitatively and quantitatively most significant sub-market for the technologically most advanced weapons systems⁴⁹. Arms standardization in the Alliance would take away much of the force of the argument “if we don't supply, others will”. Would-be buyers from the developing countries could thus no longer simply play suppliers off against each other. Rather, intensive intra-NATO deliberations could take place, based on individual cases, about which arms transfers, to which regions of the world, would, and would not, be in the Alliance's own interests. If one considers the extent to which regional conflicts touch upon the central interests of the Western Alliance, this would be an advantage the value of which ought not be underestimated.

VI. Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to illuminate some of the problems and opportunities which arise from the application of the concept of arms control to the situation of the Third World. The results arrived at present the following picture: armament in the developing countries is characterized, both quantitatively and qualitatively, by substantial rates of escalation. Here a central role accrues to conventional arms transfers, their commercialization and the resulting transition from a seller's market to a buyer's market. The most important arguments for arms control in the Third World – regional stabilization and release of resources for non-military purposes – are evaluated in quite different terms by developing countries and industrialized supplier countries. In the Third World itself the necessity for arms control is not seen as a burning issue. These countries point to the enormous arms potentials in the industrial countries and

demand that they too should have to take effective measures to promote the processes of arms control and disarmament.

Conventional arms transfers play the key role in arms control in the Third World. Any limitations, it seems, can be effected – if at all – from the supplier side. But an obstacle here is the competition between suppliers both in East and West and within the West. The latter competition could however be drastically reduced by the adoption of mutually standardized arms production on the part of the most important Western industrial states, a policy which in any case, owing to the explosion in the development costs of weapons systems, is already high on NATO's agenda for the 1980's.

Future progress toward arms control in the Third World, as the present analysis indicates, can be seen as being dependent above all on concerted, unilateral supplier limitations imposed by the big Western arms producers. Whether or not one considers a development of this sort *desirable* depends upon the normative position one takes. At this normative level of argument one may well hold the point of view that, in the face of the evident trends towards the quantitative and qualitative expansion of Third World military machines, the Western supplier countries ought to have the right to examine whether this trend runs counter to their own interests and if necessary to develop and adopt mechanisms to direct it.

To assert that the armament of developing countries – even friendly developing countries – in every form is in the global interests of the West is a very tenuous claim indeed. The experience of Iran has demonstrated how fragile is the notion of establishing dominant regional powers as “representatives” of Western positions. In the case of Israel, the United States has for some time seen its own weapons deliveries contributing to the undermining of the recipient's readiness to make the desired political concessions. The instability of numerous regimes in developing countries and latent regional conflicts ultimately create a problematic situation in which the same arms deliveries that are rational in the short term prove in the middle and long term to be a boomerang against the suppliers themselves. The difficulty for the West is that the present structure of the international arms market offers few opportunities for suppliers to bring their goals to fruition by means of directing conventional arms transfers. Of course any forward-looking interpretation quickly shows that it is in the West's security interests to bring about a change in this state of affairs.

Arms control in the Third World, enforced by the suppliers, could be perceived by the recipient countries as a provocation, especially in view of the existing arms potentials of the developed states. Seen from the viewpoint of the leading Western nations, this charge need not be conceded. In

Europe, advanced armaments, together with the existence of nuclear potentials, have so far led to a degree of stability completely unknown in many Third World regions. Although the threats arising from conflicts among industrialized states can assume existential proportions as far as the developing countries are concerned, they are far less probable than the obverse danger that military disputes in the Third World may spill over into the area of confrontation between the advanced industrialized military blocs. If it is therefore in the interests of security to withhold certain weapons or certain armaments patterns from certain regions of the world, then one must simply stand up to the charge of discrimination and paternalism.

NOTES

¹ ERHARD FORNDRAN: *Ist Rüstungskontrolle noch relevant? (Is Arms Control Still Relevant?)*. In: Erhard Forndran et al. (ed.): *Rüstungskontrolle und Sicherheit in Europa*. Bonn: 1979, pp. 3–21 and 14–15.

² The Anglo-Saxon literature speaks of “arms race stability” and “crisis stability”.

³ This perspective is particularly clear, e. g., in THOMAS C. SCHELLING: *Strategy and Arms Control*. New York 1961.

⁴ A compilation of existing arms control agreements is contained in STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE: *Arms Control: A Survey and Appraisal of Multilateral Agreements*. London 1978.

⁵ Among the most important of these institutions are the Geneva Conference of the Disarmament Committee of the United Nations; the bilateral discussions on strategic arms limitation (SALT); and the Vienna troop reduction negotiations (MBFR/MFR, or more precisely, MURFAAMCE: Mutual Reduction of Forces and Associated Measures in Central Europe).

⁶ Here, see e. g. the essays in the anthology by ERHARD FORNDRAN et al., op. cit.; and KLAUS-DIETER SCHWARZ (ed.): *Sicherheitspolitik (Security Policy)*. Bad Honnef 1978.

⁷ E. g., DONALD G. BRENNAN (ed.): *Arms Control, Disarmament and National Security*. New York 1961.

⁸ For a recent survey of the literature, see the recent bibliography by GÜNTER SCHWARZ et al.: *Sicherheit und Zusammenarbeit: Eine Bibliographie zu MBFR, SALT und KSZE (Security and Cooperation: A Bibliography of MBFR, SALT and CSCE)*. Baden-Baden 1980. On the state of the Vienna negotiations see HANS RATTINGER: *MBFR-Stagnation und weitere Aussichten (MBFR-Stagnation and Future Prospects)*. In: *Außenpolitik (German Foreign Affairs Review)*, 30, 1979, pp. 336–348.

⁹ See TED GREENWOOD: *Nuclear Proliferation*. New York 1978.

¹⁰ “Developed” here means all the states of Europe (including the Soviet Union), U.S.A., Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand. All other states are counted as the “Third World”, which admittedly amounts to neglecting some enormous inter- and intra-regional differences in economic stages and military potentials for the purposes of the analysis.

¹¹ See ANNE H. CAHN et al.: *Arms Trade in the 1980s*. In: Anne H. Cahn et al.: *Controlling Future Arms Trade*. New York 1977, pp. 25–105.

¹² See ROBERT E. HARKAVY: *The Arms Trade and International Systems*. Cambridge (Mass.) 1975, p. 104 et seq.; MICHAEL MIHALKA: *Supplier-Client Patterns in Arms Transfers: The Developing Countries, 1976–76*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.): *Arms Transfers in the Modern World*. New York 1980, pp. 49–76.

¹³ ANNE H. CAHN et al., op. cit.

¹⁴ DAVID C. GOMPERT et al.: *Introduction: Controlling Arms Trade*. In: Anne H. Cahn et al., *ibid.*, pp. 1–23.

¹⁵ *Conventional Arms Transfer Policy: Statement by the President, May 19, 1977*. In: *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, 13, 1977, p. 756 et seq.

¹⁶ ANNE H. CAHN: *Arms Transfer Constraints*. In: Uri Ra'anan et al. (ed.): *Arms Transfers to the Third World*. Boulder (Col.) 1978, pp. 327 to 344.

¹⁷ JOHN H. BARTON et al.: *International Arms Control*. Stanford (Cal.) 1976; p. 22 et seq.

¹⁸ E. g., BERNARD BRODIE: *Strategy in the Missile Age*. Princeton 1959; GLEEN H. SNYER: *Deterrence and Defence*. Princeton 1961.

¹⁹ ROBERT L. BUTTERWORTH: *Managing Interstate Conflict 1945–1974*. Pittsburgh 1976.

²⁰ For a summary of the various positions, see STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE: *World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook 1978*. London 1978, p. 301 et seq.; STEPHANIE NEUMAN: *Arms Transfers and Economic Development*. In: Stephanie Neuman et al.: *Arms Transfers in the Modern World*. New York 1980, pp. 219 to 245; GAVIN KENNEDY: *The Military in the Third World*. New York 1974, chs. 9, 10, 15.

²¹ UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS, UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR DISARMAMENT: *Economic and Social Consequences of the Arms Race*. New York 1978.

²² EMILE BENOIT: *Defense and Economic Growth in Developing Countries*. Lexington (Mass.) 1973. On the connection between armaments, growth and development in the Third World see also the exhaustive and committed study by PETER LOCK et al.: *Rüstung und Unterentwicklung (Armaments and Underdevelopment)*. In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 18/78, pp. 3–28.

²³ JONATHAN ALFORD (ed.): *The Future of Arms Control. Part III: Confidence Building Measures (International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Papers, No. 149)*. London 1979.

²⁴ On the discussion of concrete goals for conventional arms control in Central Europe and its problems, see CHRISTOPH BERTRAM: *The Future of Arms Control. Part II: Arms Control and Technological Change: Elements of a New Approach (International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Papers, No. 146)*. London 1978; JOSEPH I. COFFEY: *Arms Control and European Security*. London 1977; JOHN H. BARTON et al., op. cit., p. 249 et seq.

²⁵ E. g., UWE NERLICH: *Die Politik des Streitkräfteabbaus in Europa (The*

Politics of Military Force Reductions in Europe). In: *Europa-Archiv* 1977, pp. 197–204.

²⁶ See ABAHAM S. BECKER: *Military Expenditure Limitation for Arms Control: Problems and Prospects*. Cambridge (Mass.) 1977.

²⁷ Conventional arms transfers to developing countries are systematically documented in three publications, namely: INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES: *The Military Balance*. London annually; UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY: *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers*. Washington, D. C. annually; and STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE: *World Armaments and Disarmament: SIPRI Yearbook*. London annually.

The SIPRI Yearbooks bring up to date the basic, definitive work by SIPRI: *The Arms Trade with the Third World*. Stockholm 1971, as well as the associated *Arms Trade Registers*. Stockholm 1975. While the USACDA registers actually exported arms transfers by monetary value, the IISS ("major identified arms agreements") and SIPRI report on the quantities of transferred weapons systems as well as orders which are not necessarily filled. SIPRI utilizes exclusively public sources. For a critique of these three data collections see, e. g., EDWARD J. LAURENCE et al.: *Understanding Arms Transfers through Data Analysis*. In: U. Ra'anani et al. (ed.): *Arms Transfers to the Third World*, op. cit., pp. 87–106; EDWARD T. FREI: *Understanding Arms Transfers and Military Expenditures: Data Problems*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), op. cit., pp. 37–46; EDWARD KOLODZIEJ: *Measuring French Arms Transfers: A Problem of Sources and some Sources of Problems with ACDA Data*. In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 23, 1979, pp. 195–227.

²⁸ MICHAEL MOODIE: *Defense Industries in the Third World*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), op. cit., pp. 294–312; HERBERT WULF: *Rüstungsimport als Technologietransfer (Arms Imports as Technology Transfer)*. Munich 1980.

²⁹ GEOFFREY KEMP: *Arms Transfers and the 'Back-End' Problem in Developing Countries*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), op. cit., pp. 264–275.

³⁰ An up-to-date survey of indigenous and licensed production of weapons in the Third World is contained in the 1979 SIPRI Yearbook, p. 15 et seq.

³¹ See HELGA HAFTENDORN: *Der internationale Rüstungstransfer (The International Arms Transfer)*. In: *Europa-Archiv* 1978, pp. 331–340.

³² JOZEF GOLDBLAT: *Monitoring Arms Control*. In: Jane O. Sharp (ed.): *Opportunities for Disarmament*. Washington, D. C. 1978, pp. 69–78.

³³ See UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS, UNITED NATIONS CENTRE FOR DISARMAMENT: *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 2, 1977. New York 1978, p. 263 et seq.

³⁴ PETER M. DAWKINS: *Conventional Arms Transfers and Control: Producer Restraints*. In: Anne H. Cahn et al. (eds.): *Controlling Future Arms Trade*. New York 1977, pp. 107–159.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ ANNE H. CAHN: *Arms Transfer Constraints*, op. cit.

³⁷ See JACQUES HUNTZINGER: *Regional Recipient Restraints*. In: Anne H. Cahn et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 161–197.

³⁸ Excerpts reprinted in STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE: *Arms Control: A Survey and Appraisal of Multilateral Agreements*. London 1978, p. 121.

³⁹ See note 33.

⁴⁰ For a synopsis and documentation of the negotiations within the United Nations on issues of disarmament and arms control, see the books of the UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS: *The United Nations and Disarmament*. New York 1971 and 1976.

⁴¹ On this see the essays by WILLIAM B. QUANDT: *Influence through Arms Supply*, and by URI RA'ANAN: *Soviet Arms Transfers and the Problem of Political Leverage*; both in: Uri Ra'anan et al. (eds.): *Arms Transfers to the Third World*. Boulder (Col.) 1978, pp. 121–130 and 131–156. See also WILLIAM H. LEWIS: *Political Influence: The Diminished Capacity*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 184–199.

⁴² ANNE H. CAHN: *The Economics of Arms Transfers*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 173–183.

⁴³ CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE: *The Effect of Foreign Military Sales on the U. S. Economy*. Washington, D. C. 1976.

⁴⁴ UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY: *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1968–1977*. Washington, D. C. 1979.

⁴⁵ Nevertheless, in Helsinki in 1977 bilateral negotiations were begun between the USA and USSR on this problem. They were fruitless, however, and were not continued. See SIPRI Yearbook 1979, p. 174.

⁴⁶ ROBERT E. HARKAVY: *The New Geopolitics*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 131–151.

⁴⁷ On the arms export policy of the United States under the Carter Administration, see PHILIP J. FARLEY et al.: *Arms Across the Sea*. Washington, D. C. 1978; Jo L. HUSBANDS: *How the United States Makes Foreign Military Sales*. In: Stephanie G. Neuman et al. (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 155–172. Probably the best known case of American unilateral withholding of arms deliveries to the Third World was the U. S. refusal to sell Pershing missiles to Israel.

⁴⁸ See FRED M. ANDERSON: *Weapons Procurement Collaboration*. In: *Orbis* 20, 1977, pp. 965–990.

⁴⁹ On the significance of arms standardization in NATO to the control of conventional arms deliveries to the Third World, see the comprehensive work by PETER M. DAWKINS, *op. cit.*