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Book Review

SIPRI. 2006. *SIPRI Yearbook 2006. Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*. SIPRI Publications. Oxford: Oxford University Press. xxxvi + 888 pp. ISBN 0-19-929873-4 (hardback) Price: £80.00.

by Bjørn Møller (29 November 2006)

This year's *SIPRI Yearbook* lives up to the reputation of its predecessors. It provides a nice mixture of reliable data and sound analyses on selected important topics. In her introduction, SIPRI Director Alyson Bailes points to a new emphasis on "active security," a shift from policies based on (mutual or unilateral) restraint to one of actively "building a state's preferred security environment," for example by means of military intervention (p. 14), a development which obviously does not favor arms control or disarmament. This may, in part, explain the seeming discrepancy between the number of conflicts worldwide and the acquisition of weaponry. In the chapters devoted to armed conflicts, the downward trend in the number of conflicts has continued from 25 ten years ago, to 23 in 2000 and only 17 in 2005, mainly thanks to the cessation of several African conflicts. (In 2005, Africa suffered "only" three.) No such benign trend is visible with regard to military expenditure which continue to rise. Having risen by about one-third over the decade, they now have passed the one trillion dollar mark. The United States accounts for nearly half of that (\$507 out of \$1,118 billion), partly as the result of a steep rise since 1999, and especially after 2001. The United States has also surpassed Russia as the main arms exporter (accounting for around one-third of total arms exports), mainly due to a steep rise since 2002. Counting domestic sales as well, the United States now commands no less than two-thirds of all worldwide arms sales.

The volume features several thematic articles, including some with an economic focus. Björn Hagelin, *et al.* provide an analysis of the (lack of) transparency in the "arms life cycle," i.e., the evolution of a weapons system from the R&D phase, via the production and deployment phases, to its eventual destruction (as a consequence of arms control agreements or of the end to a war). It surveys both submissions to international agencies such as the United Nations Conventional Arms Register and disclosures to the general public, in turn rightly seen as a *sine qua non* of democratic control. Julian Cooper writes on the Russian arms industry. It is becoming increasingly dependent on arms exports in spite of the continuing rise in Russian military expenditure. This sector has suffered a dramatic decline in employment, down from almost five million in the early 1990s to less than two million in 2004. Whereas Russia is no longer, as was the former USSR, a militarized economy, it nonetheless has retained some of the corporate practices of its predecessor, e.g., the manifest lack of transparency.

Sharon Wiharta contributed a survey chapter on peace-building and the new focus on Africa. She covers programs by the United Nations (and its new Peacebuilding Commission), the EU, the G8, the World Bank, and those of individual countries, most of which have adopted a comprehensive approach to "peace missions," seeking to enhance human security rather than aiming merely at the restoration of peace in the narrow sense of the term.

Bjørn Møller is Senior Research Fellow at the Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, Denmark.