Foreword

This volume comes at a timely moment. Our world is not only entering a period of more intensive competition and rivalry amongst major powers. It is also doing so at a time of rapid technological change which enables a more diverse, sophisticated, and destructive array of instruments to prosecute those rivalries across an ever-wider spectrum of warfare. As such, defining, assessing, and understanding the implications of the international arms trade has never been as challenging or as imperative as it is today.

That is where this book comes in, and students and practitioners of international security affairs are the better for it. The editor, Professor Andrew Tan, has assembled an outstanding group of the world's leading thinkers on matters of global security, defence spending and procurement, and the international trade in weaponry. Together they deliver an intellectually robust yet pragmatically informative guide to the current and future trajectories of the arms trade and their relation to matters of deterrence, conflict, major power capabilities, regional balances of power, and the future of armed conflict and arms control.

It is doubly an honour and pleasure to pen the foreword for such a volume. First, it is a rare opportunity to be associated with a project of this ambition and erudition, and thus a happy task to commend it to a wide readership. But also importantly, at a personal level, I consider all the authors in this volume as colleagues and many of them I count as friends. It has been my fortunate experience to work closely with many of them – as Director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, as a Professor in the Department of Security Studies and Criminology at Macquarie University, and in other capacities – to contribute in our own ways to help make our planet a safer and more stable place.

In that spirit, the authors in this volume have made such a contribution by illuminating the complexities and risks of the international arms trade and its impact on regional and global security.

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