

CHAIR: Sofia Frabotti

TOPIC: Enforcing stricter rules concerning the sale of weapons worldwide



Introduction

The topic of the sale of weapons worldwide is an important and relevant issue which constantly develops.

Arms-producing companies, also referred to as arms dealers, defense contractors, or as the military industry, produce arms for the armed forces of states and civilians. Departments of government also operate in the arms industry, buying and selling weapons, munitions and other military items. Therefore, it is of outstanding importance to note that more emphasis should be put on international regulations.

The landscape of the weapons industry is in constant transformation, and the market in 10 years' time will look considerably different from today's, as many of the countries that now are large importers will become tomorrow's exporters.

Even if a wide range of national, regional and international rules have been established, legally traded arms still too often end up in the hands of terrorists and criminals. They end up in the use of armed violence and conflict or for the purposes of internal suppression, inhuman and degrading treatment and other major violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Currently, national practices and required procedures vary extensively. Most arms-producing companies operate in a heavily regulated and controlled national environment. However, the business environment is in danger of becoming more divided between actors struggling to be responsible, accountable and transparent, and those who utilize escape routes to gain market advantage.

Many industrialized countries have a domestic arms-industry to supply their own military forces. Some countries also have a strongly built legal or illegal domestic trade in weapons for use by its citizens, primarily for self-defense, hunting or sporting purposes. Illegal trade in small arms occurs in many countries and regions affected by political instability. The Small Arms Survey estimates that 875 million small arms circulate worldwide, produced by more than 1,000 companies from nearly 100 countries.

The STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE (SIPRI)'s newly released data shows that the volume of major weapons transfers during 2012–2016 increased by 8.4% compared to 2007–2011. This is the highest volume of arms transfers during any five-year period since 1990. The SIPRI, is an international institute based in Sweden, dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. Established in 1966, SIPRI provides data, analysis and recommendations, based on open sources, to policymakers, researchers, media and the interested public. SIPRI is based in Stockholm.

SIPRI uses the unique trend-indicator value (TIV) to measure the volume of international transfers of major weapons. This takes into account any transfers of major arms, regardless of the price paid or agreed between the supplier and the recipient.



Countries that export the most major weapons

Ten countries are responsible for the vast majority of all major arms exports, accounting for 90 percent of global sales, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The new study said the global trade of heavy weapons systems has now reached its highest level since the end of the Cold War in 1991.

The world's top five major arms **exporters** are the United States, Russia, China, France and Germany. Together, they account for 74 percent of the total volume of exports.

- The **UNITED-STATES** remains the largest exporter of conventional weapons in the world. The U.S accounts for 33 percent of global arms transfers, up from 29 percent in 2006-2010, according to SIPRI. The **TOP CLIENTS** are Saudi Arabia (9.7 percent), United Arab Emirates (9.1 percent), Turkey (6.6 percent).
- **RUSSIA** remains the second largest weapons supplier in the world with a 25 percent share in 2011-2015, up from 22 percent 2006-2010. The **TOP CLIENTS** are India (39 percent), China (11 percent), Vietnam (11 percent).
- Leaping from the world's eighth-largest weapons exporter in 2006-2010 (3.6 percent share) to No. 3 in 2011-2015 (5.9 percent share), **CHINA** is becoming a major player in supplying weapons for conflicts and general defense around the world. China has moved from a net arms importer to a powerhouse exporter in just a few short years, producing its own versions of Russian military hardware as well as developing weapons technology for its own use and for

sale around the world. The **TOP CLIENTS** are Pakistan (35 percent), Bangladesh (20 percent), Myanmar (16 percent). China maintains the world's largest standing army with 2.3 million troops.

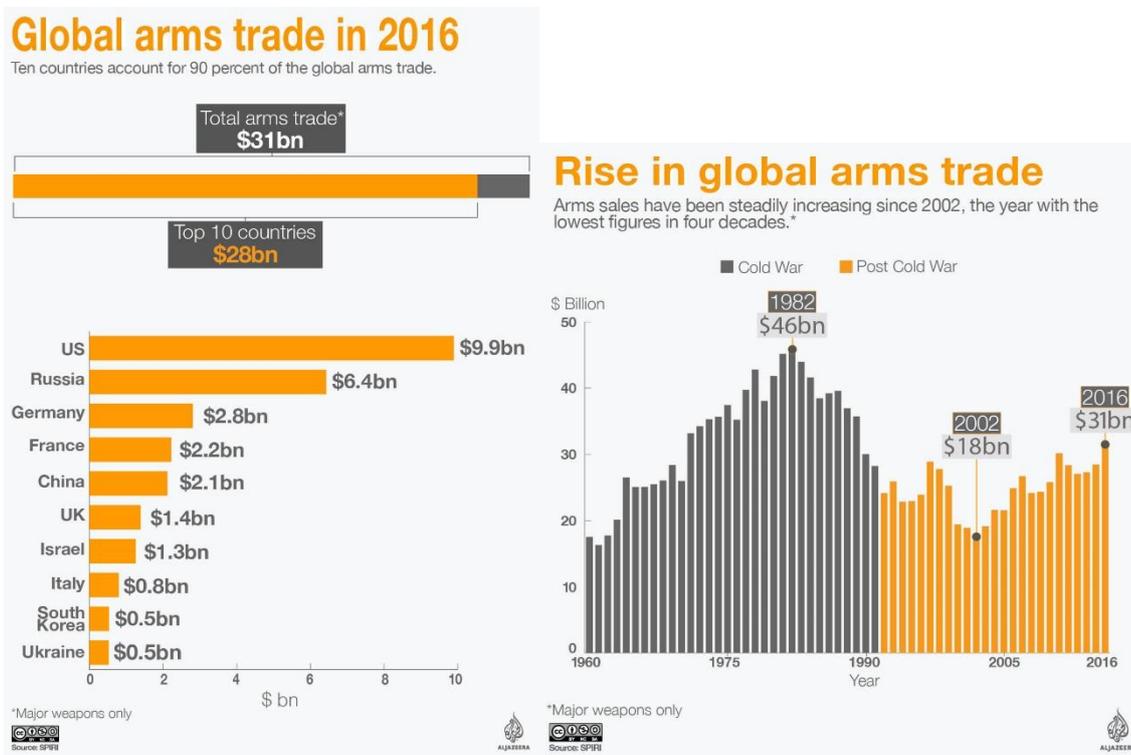
- **FRANCE** is ranked fourth, while it used to be considered as the third largest weapons exporter until 2006, the SIPRI study shows. The French arms exports are estimated at 8% of the total sales. United Arab Emirates (32%), Singapore (13%) and Greece (12%) are the largest of France's clients. Among its top sales, France delivered Mirage Combat Aircrafts to the UAE in the last five years.
- **GERMANY's** share of global arms exports fell to 4.7 percent during 2011-2015, down from 11 percent in 2006-2010 when its exports had doubled from the previous five years. Germany's arms exports are showing rapid growth, however, although much of the growth has come from the sale of air refueling tankers to Britain, among other large-ticket items like submarines. The **TOP CLIENTS** are the United States (13 percent), Israel (11 percent), Greece (10 percent) 2006-2010 – Turkey (15 percent), Greece (13 percent)

In the Middle East, major arms imports have surged over the past few years, the SIPRI report said.

Between 2012 and 2016, imports by countries in the region skyrocketed by 86 percent, accounting for 29 percent of global weapons purchases.

Globally, India, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates were the most prolific **importers** of major weapons. Saudi Arabia is the US biggest customer, and aircrafts are its biggest products.

As of the end of 2015, the USA had numerous outstanding large arms export contracts, including contracts to supply a total of 611 of its new generation F-35 combat aircraft to nine states.



Weapon production

➤ Fig 1.3: An extract from *The Guardian*, showing the approximate top 20 arms producers worldwide, with sales being represented in million \$.

Rank, 2010	Rank, 2009	Company	Country	Arms sales, 2010	Arms sales, 2009	Arms sales as % of total sales, 2010
1	1	Lockheed Martin	USA	35,730	33,430	78
2	2	BAE Systems	UK	32,880	32,540	95
3	3	Boeing	USA	31,360	32,300	49
4	4	Northrop Grumman	USA	28,150	27,000	81
5	5	General Dynamics	USA	23,940	23,380	74
6	6	Raytheon	USA	22,980	23,080	91
8	8	BAE Systems Inc. (BAE Systems, UK)	USA	17,900	19,280	100
7	7	EADS	Trans-European	16,360	15,930	27
8	8	Finmeccanica	Italy	14,410	13,280	58
9	9	L-3 Communications	USA	13,070	13,010	83
10	10	United Technologies	USA	11,410	11,110	21
11	11	Thales	France	9,950	10,200	57
12	12	SAIC	USA	8,230	8,030	74
13	27	Oshkosh Truck	USA	7,080	2,770	72
14	13	Computer Sciences Corp.	USA	5,940	6,050	37
15	14	Honeywell	USA	5,400	5,380	16
16	16	Safran	France	4,800	4,740	34
17	19	Rolls-Royce	UK	4,330	4,260	26
18	18	General Electric	USA	4,300	4,700	3
19	17	ITT Corp.	USA	4,000	4,730	36
20	22	Almaz-Antei[d]	Russia	3,950	3,260	89

The financial value of the arms trade.

It is not possible to describe a precise financial value to the international arms trade. However, by aggregating financial data on the value of their arms exports as released by the main suppliers, it is possible to make an indicative estimate. According to official government data, the estimated financial value of the international arms trade in 2007, the last year for which data is available, was \$51.1 billion, which represents 0.3 per cent of world trade. This figure is likely to be lower than the true figure since a number of significant exporters, including China, do not release data on the financial value of their arms exports. Although the SIPRI data on international arms transfers and official government data on the financial value of the arms trade are based on different methodologies, both have tended to increase since 2001.

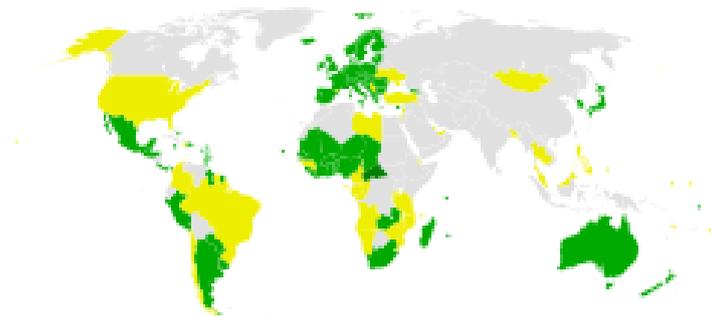
The ATT (ARMS TRADE TREATY)

To accomplish the strengthening of international regulations, it should be seen as a requirement to sign treaties relevant to the issue at hand to prevent violations of human rights and contributors escalating the issue to be held responsible for their actions. Such a treaty is the ATT (Arms Trade Treaty), and according to the UNODA (United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs), we should consider encouraging non-signatory states signing the treaty and make the ATT more applicable for all Nations as it covers this issue as well as to a large extent many issues.

The new legally binding rules introduced to regulate the international trade in conventional arms by the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) – adopted by the UN in 2013 and in force from the 24th of December

2014 – establish common criteria and international minimum standards to govern the trade in conventional arms that are likely to have a significant impact on the arms industry, and the industry actors will be one of the key stakeholders in bringing the ATT into effective reality.

Text: <https://unoda-web.s3-accelerate.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/English7.pdf>



Map showing which states have signed or ratified the Treaty.

Ninety-two states have ratified the treaty, and a further 41 states have signed but not ratified it.

The treaty was negotiated in New York City at a global conference under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) from 2–27 July 2012. As it was not possible to reach an agreement on a final text at that time, a new meeting for the conference was scheduled for 18–28 March 2013. On 2 April 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted the ATT.

Working to improve lives and livelihoods around the world, the United Nations system is directly confronted with the impact of the absence of regulations or lax controls on the arms trade. Those suffering most are civilian populations trapped in situations of armed violence in settings of both crime and conflict, often in conditions of poverty, deprivation and extreme inequality, where they are all too frequently on the receiving end of the misuse of arms by State armed and security forces, non-State armed groups and organized criminal groups.

Inadequate controls on arms transfers have led to widespread availability and misuse of weapons. One serious consequence is the disruption of life-saving humanitarian and development operations because of attacks against staff of the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations. In many areas of work, the United Nations faces serious setbacks that ultimately can be traced to the consequences of the poorly regulated arms trade. We see weapons pointed at us while maintaining international peace and security, in promoting social and economic development, supporting peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding efforts, monitoring sanctions and arms embargoes, delivering food aid or helping internally displaced persons and refugees, protecting children and civilians, promoting gender equality or fostering the rule of law. That is why the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty is so significant for the UN system as a whole.

<https://theconversation.com/explainer-what-is-the-arms-trade-treaty-37673>

Key terms:

Small arms

There is no official definition of small arms, but the mostly used definition is revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, assault rifles, sub-machine guns and light machine guns.

The Black Market

Illegal trade of arms takes place on the black market, violating price controls and rationing. Nevertheless, it is no official organization, nor is it one single person. It is a phenomena happening all over the place.

Heavy arms

There is no official definition, generally accepted is: Heavy machine guns, hand-held underbarrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems; portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems (MANPADS); and mortars of calibres of less than 100 mm.

Illicit arms trade

Illicit arms trade is the transfer of or the trade with weapons in their entirety or in pieces in violation of existing national or international laws. This includes the illicit manufacturing and procurement as well as the unregulated distribution of arms.

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

One of the most important attempts to solve the problem of illegal arms trade was the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) from March 2013. Today it is signed by 130 out of 193 member states and was ratified by 79 of them. Goals of the Treaty are the establishment of highest possible standards and regional control systems for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and the prevention against their illegal trade and diversion (Article 1). This should encourage international and regional peace, security and stability and reduce human suffering in the active zones (Article 1). Before that smaller Attempts were signed and ratified. For example, the "Program of Action" (PoA) had the same goals, but only for small weapons. The Program was designed for a long term; in detail it says that the member states should report back their results each year to the United Nations. The Nations did not do mostly this, but there were no consequences or subsidies if the Treaty was not respected.

Possible Solutions

The topic concerning the sale of weapons worldwide no matter which kind is always complex and solutions are not always easy to find. Many nations, especially in weaker financial regions, are

dependent on trading weapons to boost their domestic economy. Possible solutions could be a closer collaboration of governments by banning or controlling the trade of certain weapons to certain areas or stabilizing the region affected by illegal arms trade, e.g. by making the economy less independent from illegal arms trade. Economical support programs or humanitarian missions in the active zones, bound by the United Nations, could achieve this. Other solutions are stricter controls and pressure when member states break an engagement like the Arms Trade Treaty or allow companies to trade in certain regions, which are either not declared as safe or stable.

Sources:

<https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc11131.doc.htm>