



Arms Trade

The United Nations, in its work to assist people all over the world, is confronted every day with the negative impact of lax controls on the arms trade. In all parts of the world, the ready availability of weapons and ammunition has led to human suffering, political repression, crime and terror among civilian populations. Irresponsible arms transfers can destabilize security in a region, enable the violation of Security Council arms embargoes and contribute to human rights abuses. Importantly, investment is discouraged and development disrupted in countries experiencing conflict and high levels of violence, which also affect their ability to attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

<https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/ArmsTrade/>

UN Treaties

- Arms Trade Treaty: <https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/arms-trade-treaty-2/>
entered into force on 24 December 2014
- UN Treaty Collection: <https://bit.ly/2IS5Kwu>

Background Information

- Following lengthy process which began in the 1990s, General Assembly today passes Arms Trade Treaty (2 April 2013): <https://disarmament.unoda.org/update/20130402/>
- Audiovisual Library of International Law: Arms Trade Treaty / Introductory note by Peter Woolcott: <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/att/att.html>
- Fact Sheet on the Arms Trade Treaty (January 2017): <https://bit.ly/2mAfPOT>
- Statement on Arms Trade Treaty's 100-State-Party Milestone (DC/3795, 14 December 2018): <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/dc3795.doc.htm>

UN Entities

- United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) – The Arms Trade: <https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/ArmsTrade/>
- The Global Reported Arms Trade – The UN Register of Conventional Arms <https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/register/> (UNROCA) <https://www.unroca.org/>
- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) - Conventional Arms and Ammunition <https://unidir.org/programme/conventional-arms-and-ammunition/>
<https://unidir.org/search/search?search=%22arms%20trade%20treaty%22>

Selected UN documents and publications

- A/CONF.217/2013/2 (2 April 2013): Report of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty: <https://docs.un.org/A/CONF.217/2013/2>
- Further UN documents on "Arms Trade" – *click [here](#)*
- The Arms Trade Treaty: Regulating Brokering to Reduce the Risk of Diversion (UNIDIR, 2025): <https://doi.org/10.37559/CAAP/25/ASC/04>
- Monitoring and verification of the arms trade and arms embargoes / by Michael Brzoska (In: disarmament forum, 2010, no. 3): <https://www.unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/arms-control-verification-en-320.pdf>

Research & Documentation

- UN Library at Geneva Research Guide - Conventional Weapons and the Arms Trade <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/conventionalarms>
- UN Library at Geneva Resource Guide - Disarmament <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/disarmament/global>
- United Nations Documentation - Research Guide on Disarmament <https://research.un.org/en/docs/disarmament>
- Disarmament Yearbooks Online 1945 – 2023 <https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/yearbook/>
- UNRIC Library Backgrounder – Disarmament <https://unric.org/en/unric-library-backgrounder-disarmament/>

Selected Statements and Speeches by UN Officials

- In Video Message for First Conference of States Parties to Arms Trade Treaty, Secretary-General hails 'historic' commitment to responsible weapons transfer (SG/SM/17028-DC/3577, 24 August 2015): <https://press.un.org/en/2015/sgsm17028.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General says Arms Trade Treaty's entry into force is testimony of international commitment to stop irresponsible arms transfers (SG/SM/16436-DC/3537-L/T/4440, 23 December 2014): <https://press.un.org/en/2014/sgsm16436.doc.htm>
- Arms Trade Treaty enters force, Secretary-General announces, urging rapid weapons regulation through implementation, universalization (SG/SM/16201-DC/3520-L/T/4435, 25 September 2014): <https://press.un.org/en/2014/sgsm16201.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, marking anniversary of Landmark Arms Trade Treaty, calls upon all states to join without delay (SG/SM/15741-DC/3484, 2 April 2014): <https://press.un.org/en/2014/sgsm15741.doc.htm>
- Peace, security, human dignity can be well served by universal adoption of Arms Trade Treaty, Deputy Secretary-General tells anniversary event (DSG/SM/763-DC/3485-OBV/1324, 2 April 2014): <https://press.un.org/en/2014/dsgsm763.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, in Security Council, calls for universal ratification of Arms Trade Treaty, more support for weapons management (SG/SM/15341-SC/11132, 26 September 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sgsm15341.doc.htm>
- Deputy Secretary-General, hailing historic adoption of Arms Trade Treaty during High-level Event, urges its early ratification, entry into force (DSG/SM/704-DC/3453, 25 September 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/dsgsm704.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General applauds signing of Arms Trade Treaty by United States, as biggest exporter, other several member states (SG/SM/15325-DC/3452, 25 September 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sgsm15325.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, in Message to Caribbean Community Summit, hails region's advocacy for Small Island States, role in talks on Arms Trade Treaty (SG/SM/15154, 5 July 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sgsm15154.doc.htm>

- As Arms Trade Treaty opens for signature, Secretary-General says it will deter destabilizing arms flows, particularly in conflict-prone regions (SG/SM/15075-DC/3435-L/T/4429, 3 June 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sqsm15075.doc.htm>
- Arms Trade Treaty will generate 'much-needed momentum' for other global disarmament, non-proliferation efforts, Secretary-General says (SG/SM/14919-DC/3426, 2 April 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sqsm14919.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, 'deeply disappointed' over failure to agree arms trade treaty, hopes continuing efforts will bring it into existence (SG/SM/14914-DC/3424, 28 March 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sqsm14914.doc.htm>
- Victims of armed conflict, violence owed landmark accord, Secretary-General tells Final United Nations Conference on Arms Trade Treaty (SG/SM/14877-DC/3421, 18 March 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sqsm14877.doc.htm>
- Ahead of UN Conference, Secretary-General says robust arms treaty 'only path' to more accountability, transparency in global conventional weapons trade (SG/SM/14870-DC/3418, 14 March 2013): <https://press.un.org/en/2013/sqsm14870.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General disappointed at inability of Conference on Arms Trade Treaty to agree on text, but says 'considerable common ground' on which to build (SG/SM/14436-DC/3373, 30 July 2012): <https://press.un.org/en/2012/sqsm14436.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General concerned by limited progress in Arms Trade Treaty Negotiations; calls on delegations to show flexibility, work in good faith to bridge differences (SG/SM/14433-DC/3372, 26 July 2012): <https://press.un.org/en/2012/sqsm14433.doc.htm>
- Secretary-General, in remarks to Conference on Arms Trade Treaty, calls absence of global instrument dealing with conventional weapons 'a disgrace' (SG/SM/14394-DC/3363, 3 July 2012): <https://press.un.org/en/2012/sqsm14394.doc.htm>