

**Forum:** General Assembly 1: Disarmament

**Issue:** Addressing the Role of the Global Arms Trade in Fueling and Sustaining Armed Conflict in the Developing World

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## Introduction

On December 11 and 12 of 2016, president Bashar al-Assad personally approved of the chemical nerve agent attack in eastern Hama, Syria. This fatal attack resulted in the death of dozens of civilians with numerous others hurt. The issue of addressing the role of the global arms trade is imperative to the Disarmament committee as it continues to work towards limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments. In the developing world, nations are frequently encountered by the growing threat of foreign invaders but are often ill-equipped and illiquid to engage in combat. This has allowed terrorist groups to flourish in countries with these circumstances such as the Syrian Arab Republic. The topic at hand is to provide assistance to nations whom are engaging in this combat by addressing the role of the global arms trade. In stopping this conflict, host nations will be able to combat foreign invaders and will be open to address more pressing matters.

## Definition of Key Terms

### Global Arms Trade

The sales of weapons and military technology to other nations or organisations. This can include the sales from one nation to another or sales originating from an organisation. A common misconception about the word “arms” is what most people get wrong about this topic. The word “arms” is discussing about any weapons used by a country's military and could be in any form ranging from firearms to weaponry vehicles. This phrase does not simply just mean firearms, but extends to a more broader term; defence weapons.

### Armed Conflict

An Armed Conflict is a circumstance in which one or more parties have opposing views resulting in the usage of arms to resolve the conflict. The title of “armed conflict” is given if the incident results in

over 1000 casualties. As stated above in the word “arms” and armed conflict must involve some aspect of arms to be recognised in such manor.

## **Developing World**

The developing world refers to a country with a less developed industrial base and a low Human Development Index compared to other countries. In this circumstance, the developing world is usually lacking basic humanitarian needs and has failed to adapt with the changing demographics of the outside world. A common misconception is the “third world country” term to define underdeveloped countries. However, this term, designed a little less than a century prior to this conference, is simply referring to countries that were neither allies with United States nor the Soviet Union at their existence.

## **Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs)**

Small Arms and Light Weapons, commonly referred to as SALWs, is an individual, portable fatal weapon that is designed to expel or launch. These SALWs are designed for self defense, but are often used by terrorist organizations and also cause serious human rights violations.

## **Black Market**

A market that sells heavily taxed and illegal goods that consumers do not have regular access to because of official regulations or its scarcity. Because of the limited opportunities consumers have to buy these products, the price is often high, the trade can lead to dangerous situations.

## **Background Information**

### **UNODA (United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs)**

As countries began selling off more and more arms to other parties, member states of the United Nations chose to create a new commission to overlook the trade of these arms from one country to another. On January of 1952, the UNODA (United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs) was created by the General Assembly to monitor this affair. The Disarmament Commission is now in charge of managing the trade of conventional weapons from one party to another country.

## **Current Events**

### ***The Yemeni Crisis***

A proxy war has been undergoing on full scale in the southern middle eastern country of Yemen. This has in return caused one of the biggest humanitarian crisis the world has ever seen. Because of this war, in which Saudi Arabia and Iran are using Yemenese groups as their pawns, millions are on the brink of starvation. A new report by the Independent stated that the figure of deaths is not the estimated 10,000 civilians, but a sheer 56,000 civilian casualties. This crisis and the arms used to fight in the war has drawn the attention of many different states and is why the disarmament committee is so highly needed. In this case, regulations on the weapons given to Yemeni fighters must be enforced to ensure no more civilian casualties are recorded.

### ***Black Market Trafficking***

The black market is another way armed groups are able to obtain their weapons. The illegal means of buying and selling these weapons are hard to track, and suppliers generally know the ways of avoiding being caught. These suppliers can purchase their weapons in a country with civilian arms markets, and further sell them to the buyers. The buyers of these weapons are usually terrorist organizations or rebel groups fueling conflicts in the developing world.

## **Major Countries and Organizations Involved**

### **Countries**

In July of 2017, 120 nations across the world gathered at a United Nations meeting on this matter and adopted a treaty that completely banned nuclear weapons as a whole. These countries are not listed on this report but may be found through the bibliography bellow. All countries of the world are involved on this topic and situation simply because it is becoming a necessity to maintain an army across the world and for developing countries to be able to fend for themselves. In this, countries involved on this matter are predominantly coming from developing countries and the parties producing the arms. Nonetheless, countries such as the United States, New Zealand, China, Saudi Arabia, Canada, and India are countries that are passionate and actively support disarmament.

### **Major Weapons Exporters**

Weapons exporters generally make billions when they export weapons to other nations. The business opportunity not only provides huge profits, it also forms relationships between the importer and exporter countries. Currently, the biggest weapons exporters are, in the following order, the USA, Russia, France, Germany and China. They make up about 74.2% of the world's global arms sales.

These exporters have a huge influence over sustaining conflicts in developing nations as they fuel the offensive arsenal of these countries, which could continue fights in wars such as the Yemen War or the Syrian War.

## Weapons Importers

The current five biggest weapons importers are: India, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, China, and Algeria. These weapons importers are generally developing countries who do not have the technology to develop their own weaponry, but use these weapons to control other groups and clash with opposition. Yemen, another big weapons importer, are using these weapons to fight off anti-government rebel groups, meaning that weapons exporters continue to sustain armed conflicts and rebellions to this day.

## United Nations Office For Disarmament Issues

The United Nations Office For Disarmament Affairs was established in January of 1998 as a part of resolution (A/51/950). The office is a subsidiary of the UN, dedicated to disarm countries through peaceful communication and bargaining, and to prevent a war at all costs. The main goals of this office is to promote non-proliferation in all countries, strengthen the ability and technology to prevent countries from starting a war.

## Timeline of Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of event</b>
July 27, 1929	The Geneva Convention was created and signed regarding POWs
January 11, 1952	The United Nations Disarmament Commission was first established by the General Assembly resolution 502 (VI).
July 16, 1962	Formation of the Ten, and Eighteen-Nation disarmament committee
September 7, 1990	UN Basic Principles On the Use of Firearms by Law Enforcement officials
July 1, 1996	Nuclear capability of South Africa: conclusions and commendations

April 30, 1999	Guidelines on conventional arms control/disarmament
April 2, 2013	The Arms Trade Treaty opened into signature, which prevents parties from buying weapons that will violate human rights
December 24, 2014	Adoption of The UN Programme of Action allows for weapons to be tracked
April 27, 2017	Recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons

## Relevant UN Resolutions and Treaties

- International Tracing Instrument, 27 June 2005 (**A/60/88**)
- Commission of Inquiry on Syria (Human Rights Council), 22 August 2011, (**S-17/1**)
- Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, August of 1999, (**A/51/42**)
- Report of the Disarmament Commission for 2017, April 27 2017 (**A/72/42**)
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 2220, 22 May 2015 (**S/RES/2220 (2015)**)
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 2220, 22 May 2015 (**S/RES/2220 (2015)**)
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 2220, 22 May 2015 (**S/RES/2220 (2015)**)

## Possible Solutions

**Enforcing detailed set of laws regarding the quantity of firearms traded by promoting international cooperation through possible summits with all involved parties.** An effective way to regulate global arms trade would be to enforce a set of laws regarding firearm control. In additional measures such as regulations and international cooperation promoted through means such as hosting a convention with the intention of drafting a international agreement could be taken. Finally, all parties involved can contribute in the monitoring of firearm distribution among nations.

**Granting permission for developing nations to consume large quantities of customised, innovative firearms at an adjusted price through cooperation and research on weapons that suit the nation best.** Some nations may agree with the statement that all measures must be taken to ensure the host nation of the conflict is the resulting victor. In this scenario, means such as providing enhanced technological weapons used to combat conflict in the developing world will help ensure the central governments victory over their attackers. Member states may contribute by attributing innovative weapons used to enhance the military of the developing nation. However, in order to afford this influx of weapons, it is imperative that the producers give an economic advantage to those developing nations that chose to accept and make the purchase. This can be achieved by cooperating with the developing nation in which the conflict is originating to customise weapons that will help their military most effectively battle the conflict.

**Imposing heavy taxes and highly dissuading global arms trade in order to eliminate the preliminary fighting, and conclude with the eradication of the conflict.** Another feasible solution on the more extremist liberal side would be to impose heavy restrictions on the role of global arms trade. Nations falling into this category would view the response of violence to combat conflict is the path to go as it may cause heavier fighting to occur on both sides. This possibility would leave more casualties than required and further detrimental outcomes. Imposing heavy taxes and significantly limiting the number of firearms purchased by a country will help combat this issue at hand as the conflict will in return resort to less violence and make it easier for the originating nation of the conflict to cease control.

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