

Arms Trade Treaty

Oxfam America Policy Brief

FEBRUARY 2013

Close to 750,000 people die each year from armed violence. Thousands more are injured, raped, or forced to flee from their homes as a result of the unregulated global arms trade. Much of this violence could have been prevented had the global community controlled this trade.

The harm can also be quantified in terms of stunted economic development. In *Africa's Missing Billions*, Oxfam, IANSA, and Saferworld estimated that armed conflict costs Africa around \$18 billion per year, seriously derailing development. A patchwork of weak national laws allows unscrupulous brokers to traffic across borders, delivering weapons into the hands of war criminals, human rights abusers, and criminal networks. In 2010, less than half of the world's governments reported having basic controls on the import of small arms and light weapons.

A solution is within reach The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), if agreed to by states in spring 2013, will be a ground-breaking conventional arms agreement with the potential for tremendous positive humanitarian impact. The robust Arms Trade Treaty will require countries to develop comprehensive import, export, and transit controls, and it will prohibit arms transfers where there is a substantial risk that the weapons will be used in violation of international standards.

Oxfam America recommendations Oxfam America urges the US government and other nations to negotiate, sign, and ratify a global, legally binding agreement that can ease the suffering caused by irresponsible transfers of conventional weapons and munitions.

1. An ATT must set clear humanitarian standards. An ATT will be effective and save lives if there are strong arms transfer criteria linked to protection of human rights, international humanitarian law, and sustainable development.
2. The ATT must be inclusive in its scope and include all conventional weapons and all types of transfer, including import, export, re-export, temporary transfer and transshipment, in the state-sanctioned and commercial trade.
3. The ATT must include ammunition within its scope. Currently, many armed parties that have repeatedly violated human rights or the laws of war are fully armed, and weapons are readily found in conflict zones around the world. Without controls on ammunition, these weapons remain deadly for decades; with controls that stop the flow ammunition, these weapons will be unusable.



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