

## **Major Powers Fuelling Atrocities: Why the World Needs a Robust Arms Trade Treaty**

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Every year, thousands of people are killed, injured, raped and forced to flee from their homes as a result of abuses and atrocities committed with conventional arms and ammunition. Harrowing testimonies and images from conflict zones and human rights crises around the world underline the urgent need to end irresponsible arms transfers and illicit trafficking.

The UN process arising from worldwide civil society and political pressure to negotiate an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), in order to establish international standards for the control of the global arms trade, was supposed to conclude in July 2012 at the month-long UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. Progress was made but the Conference ended without agreement because of the blocking tactics of a small minority of states. (...)

This briefing illustrates the role of each of the Permanent Five in the global arms markets, and highlights key measures in the Treaty that need to be improved. Amnesty International is calling on political leaders and state officials to use their influence to secure an effective ATT by the end of March 2013.

### Conclusion

These examples of international arms transfers by the Permanent Five states, as well as many more by other arms trading countries show why a strong Arms Trade Treaty is needed. The absence of global standards to control the arms trade between countries needs to be addressed urgently and is costing hundreds of thousands of lives and blighting the livelihoods of millions of people every year.

To be effective the ATT must have a “Golden Rule” to require all States Parties to refuse, suspend or revoke authorization of an international transfer of arms that poses a substantial risk of being used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law. It should also be expressly prohibited under any circumstances for a State Party to aid or assist another state with conventional arms knowing the arms would more likely than not be used by the receiving state to commit war crimes or serious violations of human rights that are crimes under international law, such as extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and torture. (...)

Brokering, transport and financial services for international arms transfers must be regulated. Annual reports should cover data on all transfers and activities and be open to public scrutiny. No opt outs should be allowed. These strong rules would help save many lives and protect livelihoods from irresponsible arms transfers.

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