



U.S. Support for the Arms Trade Treaty

Press Statement

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Conventional arms transfers are a crucial national security concern for the United States, and we have always supported effective action to control the international transfer of arms.

The United States is prepared to work hard for a strong international standard in this area by seizing the opportunity presented by the Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty at the United Nations. As long as that Conference operates under the rule of consensus decision-making needed to ensure that all countries can be held to standards that will actually improve the global situation by denying arms to those who would abuse them, the United States will actively support the negotiations. Consensus is needed to ensure the widest possible support for the Treaty and to avoid loopholes in the Treaty that can be exploited by those wishing to export arms irresponsibly.

On a national basis, the United States has in place an extensive and rigorous system of controls that most agree is the "gold standard" of export controls for arms transfers. On a bilateral basis, the United States regularly engages other states to raise their standards and to prohibit the transfer or transshipment of capabilities to rogue states, terrorist groups, and groups seeking to unsettle regions. Multilaterally, we have consistently supported high international standards, and the Arms Trade Treaty initiative presents us with the opportunity to promote the same high standards for the entire international community that the United States and other responsible arms exporters already have in place to ensure that weaponry is transferred for legitimate purposes.

The United States is committed to actively pursuing a strong and robust treaty that contains the highest possible, legally binding standards for the international transfer of conventional weapons. We look forward to this negotiation as the continuation of the process that began in the UN with the 2008 UN Group of Governmental Experts on the ATT and continued with the 2009 UN Open-Ended Working Group on ATT.

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