



UNSC

Oakridge MUN 2026

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

Agenda: Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons

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Letter from The Executive Board

Greetings Delegates,

At the outset, we would like to inform you that it gives us immense pleasure to welcome you all to this simulation of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) at Oakridge MUN 2026. The Executive Board members hope that this simulation turns out to be an experience worth cherishing for all the participants, while accommodating a praise-worthy debate.

Throughout the conference, we will be addressing the *Agenda: Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons*.

This simulation shall be adhering to the UNA-USA Rules of Procedures, with a few necessary amendments which are required for the easy functioning of the committee in an evolving and continuous crisis format.

The sole purpose of preparing this background guide is to deliver an insight about the committee as well the agenda to the delegates. To begin with, this guide will serve as the knowledge repository, and will serve as a map for you to navigate through the mass of information which you may come across in your preparation for the conference. However, this guide is by no means the end of the research.

The Executive Board will be delighted to hear you all, bringing in solid argumentations while incorporating several new realms to the agenda. Thus, as the name 'guide' may be hinting, it will not provide you with all the information on the agenda at hand; you will have to work a bit beyond reading these papers/files. In addition, it is necessary to understand that being in such a competitive environment, we don't look out to hear what statistics or legislations you have read while researching. Rather, we will recommend you to analyse these facts and present your country's perceptions over the relevancy of these laws.

All the best!

Executive Board

MUN Rules Of Procedure (ROP)

1. Roll Call

- The Chair calls on each country to declare if they are "Present" or "Present and Voting." It refers to the voting procedure on the Draft Resolution, where a delegate can vote "Yes", "No", or opt to "Abstain".
- If "Present and Voting," the delegate cannot abstain from voting. If the delegate chooses to respond with "Present", they may answer with "Present and Voting" on subsequent days, but this is not permissible for "Present and Voting" as this reply must be used consistently from that point forth.

2. Setting the Agenda

- Delegates motion to set the agenda, followed by a formal debate on which topic to discuss first. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

3. Speakers' List

- After passing a motion to enter formal debate, delegates are placed on a speakers' list to make formal speeches. Time limits are set, and the Chair calls on delegates to speak in order.
- A delegate must raise their placard if they wish to add their name to this list. They can be on this list only once on any occasion.

4. Points

- **Point of Order:** To correct a procedural error by the Chair.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** For personal discomfort (e.g., if the room is too cold, or if a fellow delegate cannot be heard).
- **Point of Inquiry:** To ask questions about discussion or statements in committee.
- **Point of Parliamentary Inquiry:** To ask questions with regard to the Rules of Procedure.

5. Motions

- **Motion to Suspend the Meeting:** To break for caucuses or adjourn the session.
- **Motion to Close Debate:** Ends the discussion on a topic and moves to voting. Requires a two-thirds majority.
- **Motion to Table the Topic:** Postpones debate on a topic. Requires a majority vote.

6. Yields

- **Yield to the Executive Board:** A delegate yields their remaining time from their speech to the Executive Board. It is to be used as they see fit.
- **Yield to Another Delegate:** A delegate yields their remaining time for another delegate to speak. (This delegate's permission must be sought beforehand)
- **Yield to Points of Information:** A delegate yields their remaining time to Points of Information to the committee.
- **Yield to Comments:** A delegate yields their remaining time to comments from the committee.

7. Caucuses

- **Moderated Caucus:** The Chair controls the speaking order with shorter, focused speeches. The topic selected is a narrowed version of the agenda, chosen by the delegate who proposed the moderated caucus.
- **Unmoderated Caucus:** Informal discussion among delegates not under the moderation of the Executive Board.

8. Draft Resolutions and Amendments

- Delegates collaborate to create draft resolutions, which are formal solutions to the discussed issue.
- **Friendly Amendments:** Accepted by all sponsors without a vote.
- **Unfriendly Amendments:** Need to be voted on to be added.

9. Voting

- **Procedural Votes:** Includes motions and amendments; all members must vote.
- **Substantive Votes:** For resolutions and unfriendly amendments; only "Present and Voting" delegates may vote, and abstentions are allowed.

Points to Remember

1. **Foreign Policy:** Following the foreign policy of one's country is the most important aspect of a Model UN Conference. This is what essentially differentiates a Model UN from other debating formats. To violate one's foreign policy without adequate reason is one of the worst mistakes a delegate can make.
2. **Role of the Executive Board:** The Executive Board is appointed to facilitate debate. The committee shall decide the direction and flow of debate. The delegates are the ones who constitute the committee and hence must be uninhibited while presenting their opinions/stance on any issue. However, the Executive Board may put forward questions and/or ask for clarifications at all points of time to further debate and test participants.
3. **Nature of Source/Evidence:** This Background Guide is meant solely for research purposes and must not be cited as evidence to substantiate statements made during the conference. Evidence or proof for substantiating statements made during formal debate is acceptable from the following sources:
 - **United Nations:** Documents and findings by the United Nations or any related UN body is held as credible proof to support a claim or argument.
 - **Multilateral Organizations:** Documents from international organizations like OIC, NAFTA, SAARC, BRICS, EU, ASEAN, the International Criminal Court, etc. may also be presented as credible sources of information.
 - **Government Reports:** These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country.

- **News Sources — Reuters:** Any Reuters article that clearly makes mention of the fact or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by a delegate in council.
- **News Sources — State operated News Agencies:** These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, may be denied by any other country in the council. Some examples are RIA Novosti (Russian Federation), Xinhua News Agency (People's Republic of China), etc.

Please Note

Reports from NGOs working with UNESCO, UNICEF and other UN bodies will be accepted. Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc. be accepted. However, notwithstanding the criteria for acceptance of sources and evidence, delegates are still free to quote/cite from any source as they deem fit as a part of their statements.

About the Committee

The United Nations Security Council was founded following the Second World War on October 24, 1945. The Security Council is the highest decision-making body of the United Nations, with the unique capacity to impose binding agreements on member states and use force to restore peace when peaceful means of resolution fail.

Under Article 23, Chapter 5 of the UN Charter, the Security Council holds the responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Given the sole power to use force in response to attacks of force, the Security Council serves as the last resort answer to violence within the international community. As arbitrated in the UN Charter, before resorting to intervention the Security Council works to resolve international conflicts through diplomacy. Chapter VII of the Charter gives the Council the power to decide how to resolve conflicts that result in “threats to peace, breaches of the peace, or acts of aggression”.

Totalling fifteen members, the Security Council consists of 5 permanent member states and 10 non-permanent member states. Known as the P5, the permanent Security Council members are: the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the French Republic, the Russian Federation, and

the People's Republic of China. These countries were selected from the Allied forces after the end of World War II and stand as the only nations permitted as nuclear-weapon states (NWS) under the terms of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The non-permanent members are elected for two-year terms by a two-thirds approval from the General Assembly. GA Resolution 1991 (1963) requires that the members elected be broken down as: African Group, three seats; the Asia-Pacific Group, two; the Eastern European Group, one; the Latin American and Caribbean Group, two; and the Western European and Others Groups, two.

If the UN bodies were compared to that of a national government, the Security Council would serve as an executive branch, where the General Assembly would closely resemble the legislative branch. The chartered authority of the Security Council is unique in its ability to go beyond diplomacy, when it has failed, to stabilize a crisis. However, the Security Council must begin by seeking a resolution to a crisis through an arsenal of diplomatic approaches first. If adopted in resolution format this committee has the capacity to mobilize peacekeeping forces, impose economic embargoes, impose mandatory sanctions, and make press statements.

The faster that committee moves along by passing resolutions the more interesting and ad-hoc the situation of the committee becomes. The duration of committee time is limited; we expect multiple directives to be passed in each session and to follow each directive up with a crisis update. If the council is unable to pass directives, the crisis will respond by intensifying the necessity for action. To be successful in this committee delegates need to work towards gaining the support of the council.

Historical Development and Evolution of Global Arms Trade Treaties

Controlling the sale of arms around the world has been a difficult task for the international community especially due to the negative impact of the weapons in equipping the various factions with powers enhancing their efforts in the various conflicts around the world. The following examples outline some of the treaties and agreements that have been signed in an effort to achieve these goals and overcome the challenges in order to enhance overall world peace and security.

Going back into history, one of the first attempts to control arms trade could be traced as far back as the year 1648, during the Peace of Westphalia which ended the

Thirty Years War in Europe. While the treaty formulated respect for the state's self-governance and non-intervention policy in other states, it also created a framework for future attempts on arms control and peaceful coexistence of nations. Many conflicts occurred in the nineteenth century which witnessed modern industrialized warfare, proliferation of weapons and manufacture of mass-produced weapons decided by major powers to authorize fighting. The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 were some of the earliest conventions in international humanitarian law and aimed at establishing a code of conduct regarding the military, which entails rules of warfare and the prohibition of certain kinds of firearms and projectiles.

Indeed, the post First World War period did see a shift of focus to arms control and disarmament, following the realization that modern warfare was devastating, thereby provoking world leaders into attempting to find ways of preventing further wars. As a part of the Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919, measures were incorporated to regulate and control the means of production and supply of arms and ammunition, and the League of Nations was formed to uphold the cause of international peace and protect against aggressiveness among nations. The League of Nations' efforts to regulate the arms trade were largely unsuccessful, as the organization lacked the enforcement mechanisms and political will to effectively address the growing militarization and aggression of some member states. The failure of the League of Nations to prevent World War II highlighted the need for stronger international institutions and agreements to promote peace and security.

In the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations was established in 1945 with the goal of preventing another global conflict and promoting international cooperation. The UN Charter emphasized the importance of disarmament and arms control as essential components of maintaining peace and security. The creation of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly provided a platform for member states to address issues related to the arms trade and weapons proliferation. It was in the Cold War period where the world saw the drastic increase in the possession and use of nuclear weapons, where both the United States and Soviet Union engaged in a race armored with such weapons, and it was feared that if the two sides engaged in world war then the result would be disastrous to the world. This fear led to the signing of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, which sought to prohibit the spreading of nuclear arms and encourage nuclear disarmament among the states which already possessed nuclear weapons.

After the Cold War, in the early 1990s, new arguments for arms control and disarmament emerged, as the superpowers aimed at cutting back their stockpiles of

nuclear weapons and preventing conflicts in former Soviet territories. Numerous agreements aimed at minimization of nuclear weapons were signed, including the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the US and Russia. Over the last few decades, attempts to link the procurement and supply of illicit arms to various global issues like terrorism, organized crime and human rights abuse have sprouted. These problems have emerged equally, as the UN took the leading part in solving them by signing various treaties and agreements referring to the arms trade to control the conventional weapons circulation to unauthorized users. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was approved by the UN General Assembly in 2013 and the treaty came into force in 2014 to regulate the export and import of conventional arms. The treaty mandates members to evaluate the impact of arms transfers and undertake measures to prevent arms from being used to violate human rights, perpetrate violence or exacerbate conflicts.

This guide therefore discusses the progression of arms trade related treaties globally, which represents the effort to reduce the problems posed by the circulation of arms besides the effects of arms trade on peace and security in the worldwide society. However much has been achieved in bringing an end to the continuing flow of weapons into needy regions through steps towards weapon regulation and disarmament, there are many more hurdles to be crossed such as the illicit arms trade, the spread of small arms and light weapons and non-state actors in weapons proliferation.

Important Treaties and Agreements

Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons (UNPoA)

This programme was agreed to in July 2001. It seeks to encourage countries to create stricter national laws in order to stop the sale of illegal guns. Countries should control the export, and import of weapons as well as the transport and re-selling of weapons. Countries should also work to stop people involved in the illegal sale of small arms and weapons; they should be arrested and brought to court. Every weapon should have an identifying mark so that law enforcement can tell where a weapon came from.

The PoA on small arms provides a framework on how to tackle the illicit trade of small arms as follows:

- Strengthening or developing agreed norms and measures at the global, regional and national levels that would reinforce and further coordinate efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects;
- Developing and implementing agreed international measures to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons;
- Placing particular emphasis on the regions of the world where conflicts come to an end and where serious problems with the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons have to be dealt with urgently;
- Mobilizing the political will throughout the international community to prevent and combat illicit transfers and manufacturing of small arms and light weapons in all their aspects, to cooperate towards these ends and to raise awareness of the character and seriousness of the interrelated problems associated with the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in these weapons;
- Promoting responsible action by States with a view to preventing the illicit export, import, transit and retransfer of small arms and light weapons.

While the ATT and PoA on small arms are some of the latest ways the international community has attempted to deal with the scourge of small arms, there were previous efforts as well.

International Tracing Instrument (ITI)

This agreement was accepted in 2005. It is part of the Programme of Action. States promised to make sure weapons are marked and that records are kept about the weapons. This helps control the flow of weapons. Also, if weapons are used in a crime the police can find out where the weapon came from. In 2015, tracing weapons became one of the targets of Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The Arms Trade Treaty was adopted on the 2nd of April 2013 and came into force on the 24th of December 2014. 91 states are parties to the treaty and 130 countries are signatories. It asks countries not to send weapons to countries that the Security Council has determined has committed human rights abuses. It also asks countries to be open about their weapon sales and to report on their import and export of weapons. This treaty covers all weapons including tanks, missiles, warships, small arms and light weapons.

Development, humanitarian and security impacts of the illicit transfer, excessive accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons

- The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 16, on peace, justice and strong institutions, is demonstrative of the close linkage between peace and development.
- The collection of small arms and light weapons used in the context of armed conflict, violent crime and drug trafficking and the establishment of their illicit origin are important steps towards promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, in line with Goal 16.
- According to data received from States through biennial reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, national authorities collected 758,000 illicit small arms and light weapons from 2016 to 2019. According to the Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020, published by the Monitoring Illicit Arms Flows initiative of the United Nations, a total of 550,000 firearms were reported as seized during each of 2016 and 2017. The data indicate that the country of manufacture and the country where diversions and seizures take place are often not the same.
- Therefore, the responsibility that manufacturing countries have to prevent the diversion of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition requires thorough risk assessments combined with effective post-delivery measures. That said, the real global figure of seized and collected small arms and light weapons is believed to be much higher, owing to underreporting, including as a result of a lack of reporting capacity. Building the capacity of Member States to report the number of seized and collected small arms and light weapons will be crucial for monitoring progress on indicator 16.4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. States are

encouraged to develop synergies among their distinct reporting obligations.

Grave implications for children

- In 2020, the situation of children in armed conflict was marked by a sustained high number of grave violations (see A/75/873-S/2021/437). In this context, the escalation of conflict and armed clashes, often fuelled by the availability of small arms and light weapons, and disregard for international humanitarian law and international human rights law had a severe impact on the protection of children. Mitigating the impact of conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, is central to ensuring that children do not bear the brunt of armed conflict as they currently do. With more than 8,400 children killed or maimed, as verified by the United Nations in 21 situations on the children and armed conflict agenda and in the Lake Chad basin, small arms and light weapons can play a significant part in the commission of grave violations against children and in the denial of their rights. While attacks on hospitals decreased and those on schools increased, and were often committed using small arms and light weapons, both continued to endanger children and are particularly egregious in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict of the Security Council offers a key forum for identifying specific recommendations for action by the international community at large and specific States affected by conflict. While conclusions of the Working Group specifically addressing the issue of small arms and light weapons have yet to be issued, the Council is paying increased attention to weapons that result in the killing and maiming of children (see A/73/907-S/2019/509).
- All small arms and light weapons control initiatives should be carried out with due attention to their potential impacts on children. Such initiatives should be linked to other programmes related to children, adolescents and young people, such as access to justice for children; adolescent and youth employment initiatives; the separation and reintegration of children from armed groups and armed forces and child-specific disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and community-based child protection.

Linkages to terrorism and transnational organized crime

- In its resolutions 1373 (2001), 2370 (2017), 2462 (2019) and 2482 (2019), the Security Council consistently stressed the need to address the illicit traffic in and supply of small arms and light weapons to terrorists and recognized that terrorist organizations could benefit from transnational organized crime, including the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as a source of financing.
- According to recent research from the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, in the past decade, terrorists have used small arms and light weapons to carry out 85,148 terrorist attacks. At the same time, small arms and light weapons can serve as a lucrative and durable trafficking commodity or as a tool allowing terrorist organizations to facilitate trafficking activities carried out by others, for example, by forcefully controlling trafficking routes and providing protection from theft and armed robbery. In many cases, existing illicit trade routes overlap significantly with territory controlled by terrorists.
- In addition to weapons smuggled illegally across borders, including by foreign terrorist fighters, terrorist organizations also rely on legal commercial supply chains to procure weapons, ammunition and essential parts and components, including for improvised explosive devices. States are encouraged to enhance their efforts to detect and seize parts and components of weapons and ammunition, including when shipped through fast parcel deliveries, to support the fight against various types of illicit manufacture, including conversion and craft production.
- Terrorists and organized criminal groups continue to exploit and benefit from a lack of good governance and rule of law, porous borders, high levels of corruption, weak democratic institutions and poor criminal justice systems. Terrorism and transnational organized crime can cross-fertilize each other, while small arms and light weapons can serve as an enabling factor for both phenomena. States and the United Nations should address the terrorism-arms-crime nexus as interrelated and multifaceted security threats that require complementary approaches and responses.
- Counter-terrorism financing measures play a crucial role in preventing and counteracting the linkages between terrorism and the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. In that regard, the Financial Action Task

Force published in March 2021 a report on terrorist financing risks related to illicit arms trafficking in which it identified several measures that Member States could take to detect those linkages, including the conduct of proactive terrorist financing investigations to trace financial flows between illicit arms traffickers and terrorists, and the reinforcement of financial intelligence capabilities to detect linkages with terrorism.

- Border controls play a crucial role in combating the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons in the context of counter-terrorism efforts. In order to detect and prevent the movement of illicit small arms and light weapons across borders effectively, States should develop and implement comprehensive border security and management strategies and engage all relevant national agencies effectively.

Weapons and ammunition management

- Inadequately maintained stockpiles constitute serious humanitarian hazards, have a negative impact on peace and security and can thereby jeopardize the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations continued to enhance its support for national authorities, including in the framework of its peace operations, in the area of weapons and ammunition management. Through the Agenda for Disarmament and the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, the Secretary-General has committed the United Nations to promoting more effective weapons and ammunition management in peace operations, including when part of or linked to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.
- Concrete, practical support for the destruction of materiel and management of stockpiles was provided in a range of contexts. In 2019, the Mine Action Service extended its support to the assessment, rehabilitation and construction of 242 weapons storage areas and 97 ammunition storage areas. In the Central African Republic, training and assistance for national defence and internal security forces were provided, alongside the rehabilitation and establishment of storage sites. Technical advice was provided to the National Commission for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Reduction of Armed Violence and the national defence and security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Libya, where small arms and light weapons are prevalent, risk education efforts were pursued. The Mine Action Service also supported the United

Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei in fulfilling its mandate to support a “weapons-free” area by destroying weapons and ammunition confiscated by the mission and building the technical capacities and physical infrastructure to store weapons and ammunition safely (resolution 2575 (2021)).

- Integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes increasingly take place in environments characterized by well-equipped armed groups and high levels of illicit weapons, ammunition and explosives. In response to those risks, innovative tools have been developed to complement traditional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, including community violence reduction and transitional weapons and ammunition management. As part of the community violence reduction programme in the Central African Republic, 63 war weapons, 1,393 artisanal weapons, 143 rounds of ammunition and 20 unexploded ordnances have been collected since 12 August 2021. Increased community violence in the central part of Mali calls for a strengthened and coordinated action to reduce access to weapons and ammunition at the community level, in particular along the tri-border area of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger.

Arms embargoes, including benchmark assessments

- Illicit transfers of small arms and light weapons in the context of arms embargo violations remain a concern. States in which arms are shipped through ports, airports or territorial waters for transfer to embargoed countries should redouble their efforts to enforce the embargoes by applying the preventive and criminal justice measures provided under the relevant international instruments.
- The further employment of weapons and ammunition management by the Security Council as part of the benchmark assessments of arms embargoes is a welcome development. There is an ongoing need, nevertheless, to improve the national and regional implementation and enforcement of arms embargoes, as well as weapons and ammunition management standards and guidelines.
- The Security Council has increasingly called upon States to investigate and combat transnational criminal networks and armed groups involved in

arms trafficking in the context of violations of arms embargoes (e.g. resolution 2488 (2019)). COVID-19-related restrictions enhanced the challenges faced by sanctions expert panels in conducting on-site inspections of weapons seized in connection with arms embargoes imposed by the Council. In this context, the Security Council is encouraged to continue to seek reports from Member States on the steps that they have taken to implement the relevant measures, including arms embargoes, as well as to cooperate and share information with the panels.

- In its resolution 2562 (2021), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to conduct a review of the situation in Darfur, including measures to tackle the proliferation of weapons, and to provide recommendations for key benchmarks that could serve in guiding the Council in its review of the measures on Darfur. In his assessment submitted pursuant to that resolution (S/2021/696), he recommended four key benchmarks, including the completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, in order to support progress on transitional security arrangements in Darfur. He also recommended the review and updating of the weapons collection programme as a complement to the implementation of the national action plan for the protection of civilians of the Sudan.

Legal Framework and Provisions of Major Arms Trade Treaties

The arms industry is a global and a highly formalized market that deals with selling and purchasing of weapons, ammunition and implements needed in the military force in different countries. Several key arms trade treaties have since been put in place in order to stop the sale and circulation of arms with the aim of preventing them from being used in or involved in human rights violations or sponsoring conflicts. Among numerous international arms trade agreements, one can highlight the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) that was approved in the United Nations General Assembly in 2013. The ATT is intended to establish control over the conventional arms trade, which may include small arms and light weapons, and ammunition. It mandates state parties to maintain national control systems on export of arms and to evaluate the likely risks of the weapon being used to perpetrate grave breaches of provisions of international humanitarian law or human rights. When proposing or making decisions on export licenses, states parties should consider the risks of the

exports of arms which could lead to genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes.

The arms transfer also requires states parties to make all efforts to ensure that the arms are not delivered to end users who are not legally permitted or for purposes that are not permitted by the law. Another crucial treaty on arms trade is the Wassenaar Arrangement, which was signed in 1996 to enhance transparency and regulate the export of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technology. The Wassenaar Arrangement contains a list of items that states parties must control and imposes a set standard of export control of such items. The arrangement also contains provisions of endorsements regarding weapons and dual-use merchandise, as well as risk evaluation criteria related to those transfers. Another interesting aspect of the Wassenaar Arrangement is the fact that it is a non-treaty arrangement, and therefore it is more of a contractual arrangement of states parties which does not carry legal obligations on states parties. However, states parties to that arrangement are required to abide by the guidelines and principles outlined in the arrangement, and to also give reports on how they are implementing the arrangement.

Other primary treaties in arms trade include the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, and the European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Exports. The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms came into force early in 1991 in an effort to increase confidence and transparency as far as the trade of weapons is concerned. According to the register, States must submit annual reports on their conventional arms transfers, including details of the type and quantity of arms transferred and the recipient country of transfer. The OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security was signed in 1994 in order for OSCE participating states to act responsibly and transparently when transferring conventional arms so that those arms cannot be accumulated and cause insecurity in that state. These guidelines include codes of conduct on the transfer of arms and arms-related dual-use goods and technologies, as well as measures against diversion of arms and other military equipment to unauthorized end-users and/or for unauthorized objectives.

The EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports was agreed in 1998 in order to enhance obligation for and disclosure regarding arms exports within the European Union. The code of conduct also contains requirements for evaluating the possible dangers in regard to arms transfer, as well as procedures to prevent the misuse of arms delivered by a state for unauthorized consumers and for unlawful purposes.

These treaties and agreements aim at controlling the export and import of conventional arms, ensuring responsibility and accountability of States in the transfer of arms, and countering illicit trade in arms which may be utilized for the perpetration of human rights abuses or to fuel armed conflicts. These arms trade treaties require states parties to implement national control systems for managing export control of arms, identification of potential risk that accompanies arms transfers, and the necessary measures that need to be taken in order to prevent arms transferred from falling into wrong hands or for wrong purposes. Even though some of these treaties are non-binding on states parties, these documents are very useful in preventing arms trade and misuse of weapons by implementing strict measures of responsible practice.

Compliance and Enforcement Mechanisms

The international arms related trade is a crucial and understandably sensitive business of delivering weapons, military hardware, and ammunition across countries. Given that the objectives of these transfers are to be achieved responsibly and with accountability, several significant arms trade treaties exist to provide a legal framework for export and import of arms. The most widely known agreement on the arms trade is the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which was codified by the UN General Assembly in 2013. The ATT's ultimate goal is to have a standard system that enables countries to import, export, or transfer conventional arms in order to promote and facilitate peace and security rather than engage in the business of transferring arms in the illicit market.

It enjoins states parties to set up national control systems to monitor export of arms and undertake evaluations to ensure that in any given state, arms are not exported to wrongdoers or for wrongful use. The ATT also imposes certain responsibilities on states parties, among which is the responsibility to evaluate the risks that a transfer of arms may pose, namely risks of violation of human rights, terrorism and armed conflicts. The targets that states must meet include factors like the probability of employing the weapons to aggravate conflict, or commit serious breaches of IHL or human rights violations. There are also provisions in the treaty which emphasize the exchange of information that will help prevent the illicit trade of arms.

Another pivotal arms trade treaty is the Wassenaar Arrangement, in operation since 1996, for enhancing export control on conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies. The Wassenaar Arrangement contains a list of items subject to control,

and states parties are responsible for controlling the exports of these items. It also contains provisions on the sale of weapons and military goods and services, and procedures for the criteria that address the potential risks of transferring arms. It is however important to understand that the Wassenaar Arrangement is not a legally enforceable commitment but rather a voluntary arrangement in which states parties are supposed to follow the guidelines and principles that are outlined in the agreement. It is a consultative process whereby states come together to provide information to one another, increase transparency and discourage the provision of a destabilizing amount of weapons.

However, the ATT and the Wassenaar Arrangement are not the only significant international treaties controlling the arms trade — there are several others. In 1991, the United Nations created a Register of Conventional Arms which included specific aspects of arms transfer and asked states parties to provide reports on imports and exports of conventional arms annually for building confidence. It is meant to help in checking cases of stockpiling of arms and ammunition for better security in the region.

In addition, one significant instrument is the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security signed in 1994, which regulates the export of conventional arms among the OSCE member states. The code of conduct consists of provisions on arms transfers and control mechanisms to ensure that arms do not fall into the wrong hands or get used for unlawful reasons. It also enables states to share information and coordinate their efforts toward preventing the proliferation of the illegal arms trade. In 1998, the European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Exports was signed with the intention of providing guidelines on the export of arms and ensuring reasonable export controls across the member states of the European Union. The code of conduct contains parameters for the evaluation of the risk connected with arms transfers, and also contains measures for preventing arms from reaching the hands of unauthorized users or being used for unpermitted purposes. It also provides incentives to states for the correct utilization and prevention of the development and proliferation of weapons, and for fostering regional security.

Impact on Global and Regional Security

The arms trade as a phenomenon is one of the biggest industries in the world that has far-reaching effects on global as well as regional security. Legal initiatives and

measures of the principal arms trade conventions and agreements are essential features of international arms transfer systems, as they help facilitate and secure the legal process of arms transfers while considering political, economic, and security risks and compliance with international humanitarian law. The motive behind these treaties is to ensure that trade in arms does not lead to misuse of weapons that can trigger conflict, instability, and insecurity in the world and within specific regions.

Another advantage of arms trade treaties in enhancing global security stems from the accomplishment of intended trade in conventional arms in that these treaties ensure that there are common standards and/or guidelines to govern arms transfers, and in effect, they assist in eradicating the illicit trade of weapons as well as acting as confidence-building measures among nations. Transparency in arms transfers aids states in being able to control or limit the diffusion of weapons in circulation, so as not to end up in the wrong hands or used for the wrong purposes. Arms trade accords also aid in eliminating the destabilization of arms and promoting security in a region. These treaties control the sale and movement of small arms and light weapons, thus effectively limiting the development of arms races and wars occasioned by the flow of weapons.

According to arms trade treaties, states parties carrying out exportation and importation of arms have the legal obligation to conduct risk assessments and weigh different factors, including human rights abuses, terrorism, and armed conflicts, before greenlighting the transfer of arms. It also minimizes the use of weapons, which in one way or another is positive in the sense that it supports the maintenance of peace and order, especially in areas that are most affected by turbulence.

Arms trade treaties effectively coordinate or seek to ensure the non-transfer of weapons to wrongful end-users or for wrong reasons. For the same reason, preliminary criteria have been outlined to evaluate possible risks with arms transfer transactions, including collective defense, and prevention of weapons being used for aggression or abuse of human rights. States parties are expected to set up national controls as a mechanism for controlling transfers of arms to other countries as well as making efforts to stop the flow of arms to unauthorized end users. Thus, the significance of arms trade treaties in the enhancement of world security can also be observed with reference to conflict management and prevention. These treaties make sure responsible arms trading takes place and also motivate states to share information and work together to minimize the flow of weapons into prohibited regions, reducing the chances of conflicts aggravating due to the flow of arms.

In their relations, states parties should utilize dialogue and transparency in their dealings on arms transfers with an aim of improving trust and cooperation amongst nations, with a view to avoiding any incidence of armed conflict. The agreements concerning arms trade exports have a bearing towards strengthening stability and security in the regions concerned with conflicts. These treaties aid in achieving objectives of arms control and preventing arms races and regional conflicts in so far as exports and trade practices in arms are coordinated with the aim of avoiding a build-up of arms which can foment conflict. Member states should follow the guidelines and principles of the arms trade treaties that are in place in enhancing peace and security for areas of conflict.

Future Prospects and Recommendations for Strengthening Treaties

Despite achieving some success in regulating conventional arms trade, conflict has remained high across the globe, with conventional arms giving boost to conflicts, human rights abuses as well as terrorism. In order to address these concerns, the ATT, which was signed in 2013, seeks to control the global transfer of conventional weapons and encourage responsible transfer of arms. Although the ATT is a progressive improvement, as it was designed to improve transparency and accountability when it comes to arms trade, some weaknesses need to be analyzed in order to improve the treaty, its enforcement, and its effectiveness in ending the arms trade.

Looking ahead, there are several future prospects and recommendations for strengthening the treaties of the global arms trade regime:

1. **Enhanced Implementation and Compliance Mechanisms:** An apparent area that needs enhanced implementation and compliance mechanisms is that of States Parties' intent and compliance with the ATT provisions. It could involve the development of a cooperative and integrated supervision system for monitoring and evaluating arms transfers and the level of compliance with the treaty. To reinforce the main aims of the treaty, states parties also need to enhance control systems in their respective countries and enforce measures that would not allow arms to be transferred to unauthorized users and end-users.

2. **Increased Transparency and Information Sharing:** The key to strengthening the future of the arms trade treaty is to increase and improve the practice of transparency and exchange of information among the states parties. It may include the creation of an arms transfer database through which data on arms acquisitions and sales may be collected and shared to encourage confidence-building measures in order to avoid abuses of weapons. Reporting mechanisms should also be strengthened, and states should provide detailed reports giving an account of arms trade activities they undertake to ensure that responsible arms trade is carried out.
3. **Strengthening Regional and International Cooperation:** The challenges of implementing the global arms trade treaty must be met utilizing the approaches of regional and international cooperation in order to encourage institutional action. It is important that states parties engage one another and cooperate on issues such as sharing experiences and information with a view of reforming arms transfer policies in line with this convention and joining efforts and sharing information to halt the flow of illicit trade in weapons. Other players, like regional organizations and especially the United Nations, should also play a central role in encouraging cooperation among states and assisting in the implementation of the treaty provisions.
4. **Addressing Emerging Challenges:** It is realistic and logical to advance the discussion of emerging challenges and modification of treaty provisions to address new threats and risks of the developing arms trade. This can include amending the treaty on the basis of new conventional weapons, including autonomous weapons systems and cyber weapons, and questions associated with emerging technologies and non-state actors. States parties should also assess the interference of new forms of security threats, including climate change and epidemics, on the arms trade and then devise measures to counter these threats.

7 Basic Questions for Preparations

1. Is arms trade and trafficking a problem in your country?
2. What are your country's arms laws?
3. What is your government doing about illegal or unregulated arms trade?
4. What are some secondary effects of the illegal arms trade? What can be done to help the people impacted by these effects?

5. What are some global choke points in the illegal arms trade?
6. What can the UN and member nations do to better control those areas?
7. What can nations that supply (legally and illegally) arms to the global market do to make sure they are properly marking and keeping records of weapons?