

# Why we need an Arms Trade Treaty: 10 Killer Facts



Every day, thousands of people are killed, injured or forced to flee from their homes as a result of violence and conflict involving weapons. These sobering statistics demonstrate why we need strong global regulations to prevent the world's weapons falling into the wrong hands.

## **1,500 people are killed every day by conflict and armed violence**

Deaths resulting from war, armed homicides, extra-judicial executions and excessive use of force by state security forces amount to over 500,000 per year or 1,500 per day.

## **There's more international laws regulating the trade of bananas than weapons**

Legal loopholes in the laws governing the trade of weapons enable states and corporations to sell guns, bullets and teargas to dictators and tyrants, who've then used them to kill and injure civilians. Weapons are often traded irresponsibly between countries, with little consideration of whether they'll be used to commit human rights abuses.

## **12 billion bullets are produced every year**

That's almost enough to kill everyone in the world twice. There's an estimated **875 million guns** in the world right now, and about **8 million** 'light weapons' (such as heavy machine guns) are produced each year.

## **Over 26 million people have been forced to flee their homes**

Millions of people have been forced to flee their homes in fear of their lives due to armed conflict. This often pushes people further into poverty by restricting access to clean water and shelter, while increasing the likelihood of deadly diseases.

## **Child soldiers are being used in armed conflict in 19 countries**

Tens of thousands of children are being used right now by governments in their armed forces and by non-state armed groups. These children are often armed using weapons irresponsibly traded by governments and private corporations.

## **For every death, there's up to 28 serious injuries**

It's difficult to estimate exactly how many people are injured in armed conflict, past statistics indicate that as many as 28 people are injured for every person killed by weapons on battlefields.

## **Damage caused by weapons destroys infrastructure and perpetuates poverty**

As well as killing and harming people, weapons such as missiles destroy vital infrastructure that people rely on in their daily lives -- such as access to food, water and shelter. This can push survivors into poverty.

## **74 per cent of the world's weapons are supplied by just six countries**

In 2010, almost 3/4 of the world's weapons have been supplied by six of the world's most powerful countries: **USA** (34.84%), **Russia** (14.86%), **Germany** (7.43%), **United Kingdom** (6.57%), **China** (6.29%), and **France** (4%). All but Germany are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. By allowing the trading of weapons which are then used to commit or facilitate human rights abuses, these governments are permitting their use for repression, conflict, violence, and other human rights violations.

## **Systematic rape of women and girls can occur through the use of weapons**

In conflict regions such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Sierra Leone, the scale of rape and sexual violence is staggeringly high. Many women and girls have been forced into sexual slavery by fighters, and many are raped at gunpoint. Women and girls are often the forgotten victims of armed conflict.

## **A strong Arms Trade Treaty could save hundreds of thousands of lives every year**

In July this year, world leaders will come together to decide on whether to agree to legally binding international standards regulating the trade of arms between countries. This is a historic opportunity, one too important for governments to play politics with. We're using this opportunity to call for a treaty that:

- Is strong enough to regulate the trade of **all conventional weapons**, including small arms, machine guns, bullets and tear gas
- Prevents the sale and transfer of weapons that could be used to **commit serious human rights abuses**.

**For more information** on the Campaign for an Arms Trade Treaty, check out [amnesty.ca/armstreaty](http://amnesty.ca/armstreaty) or contact Hilary Homes at the national office: [hhomes@amnesty.ca](mailto:hhomes@amnesty.ca).

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