

**GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ARMS TRADE (ON THE EXAMPLE OF
THE UNITED STATES)**

Omongeldiyeva Zilola Abdukaharovna

The University of World Economy and Diplomacy

zidifiz.26@gmail.com

(99) 401 04 26

Annotation: This article provides information about the general characteristics of the arms trade on the example of the United States. In addition, the definition of what is a gun trade, the sale and purchase of weapons and several important aspects for the type of trade in also mentioned.

Key words: “Foreign policy”, arms trade, Human Rights, WMEAT, SIPRI, Cold War, export, concepts, arms characteristics

The study of the foreign policy of states is one of the important areas of the science of the theory of international relations. Sometimes foreign policy is associated with state security and basic values. In addition, domestic policy is formulated within the borders of the state, but unlike domestic policy, foreign policy it is oriented towards the external environment and must be implemented. According to J. Rosenau, foreign policy is directly related to the term “policy”, denoting the practical orientation of plans and obligations as specific directions.¹ The concept of “foreign policy” remains one of the most controversial issues in modern international relations theory. The foreign policy of the state is formed under the influence of both external and internal factors, the interdependence of which depends on the effectiveness.

For several decades, the arms trade has been one of the most profitable types of trade in the world, with growth from year to year. The presence of weapons and ammunition leads to the suffering of people, political repression, crime and the development of terrorism among the civilian population. Irresponsible delivery of weapons can destabilize the entire region, leading to violations of gun control and Human Rights. Investments are not encouraged, development is disrupted in countries with high levels of conflict and violence. In addition, countries involved in conflicts or widespread crime have the greatest difficulty in achieving internationally agreed Development Goals.

The definition of the arms trade, that is, the sale and purchase of weapons, is important. It is a type of trade that is important for the development of relationships between people and takes on the responsibility of studying several important aspects for its definition.

First, the definition of an object of trade in the arms trade is very important. The arms trade consists mainly of guns, which differ from each other in that they have different characteristics – thickness, length, weight and other characteristics. Among weapons trading facilities, weapons may be available in the following types: submachine guns, pistols, tanks, light weapons, etc. It is also important to study important aspects in trade in order to achieve a successful arms trade through trading facilities.

Secondly, the trade subject of the Arms Trade and the following aspects of the dealings are very significant. For every action in which the arms trade is transferred to money, the subject of the trade and the individuals that make it up take the responsibility of following the mandatory guidelines and must develop many concepts and views to study it. The study of an agreement with

¹ Rosenau J.N. The study of Foreign Policy. // World Politics: an introduction/ – New York: The Free Press, 1976. – P. 15.

them is considered important in order to ensure that the sales entity of the arms trade has an additional approximate payment of the seller and the purchasing persons, or only the service of the sale of parts of weapons or weapons.

Third, the definition of Service and products of the Arms Trade. Products for the sale of weapons must have a private touch, in accordance with the characteristics of the type of weapon sold. Services, therefore, include information about the relationship and services being created with the users of the gunsight, in the implementation of the trade sale.

The conceptual aspects of the study of the arms trade are studied under the influence of the definition of the physical, economic, political and human characteristics of the Arms Trade. Conceptual aspects of the study of the Arms Trade include the study of its trade. These aspects constitute the intended visions of the arms trade, the absence of its success, and the views imposed on it.

During the Cold War, hegemonic power between the United States and the Soviet Union was trying to supply weapons to support a particular group or prevent an alternative group from forming. Researchers at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute have identified three forms of gun supply in their research into the Arms Trade.² The exporting countries were primarily trying to maintain the economic efficiency of their defense industry, or the producing states to reduce their involvement in local conflicts. Three models: political, economic, and even humanitarian-purpose arms delivery will affect the decision of any supplier to arm any customer at any time.

After World War II, the arms supplier market had a more rigid oligopolistic character, and the dominance of the United States and the Soviet Union intensified. Inter-bloc arms transfers were almost zero, even importing states in remote areas did not purchase arms from the opposing Cold War-era alliance unless a change in government leadership produced a greater ideological orientation. As Harkawi noted, “the Cold War reflected a combination of factors that made arms trade bi-polar, stable hegemonic alliances under the leadership of two major states, an ideological hotbed of conflict”.³

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, world military spending in 2022 was a record high of US \$ 2.24 trillion, an increase of 19 percent over the last 10 years.⁴ In this context, the secretary-general continues to call for the elimination of the negative consequences of growing military spending. He urged states to abandon over-security and militarized approaches to peace and reduce military spending through an integrated approach aimed at maintaining peace and achieving sustainable development goals.

There are three main sources of information on simple weapons transfers. The U.S. Department of state’s Bureau of Investigation, compliance, and implementation publishes World military expenditures and arms transfers (WMEAT). Previously an independent agency under the U.S. government, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, WMEAT was issued annually until it was incorporated into the State Department in 1999, providing information on dollar-value accounts of arms imports and exports for all states.

² SIPRI Year Book 1972, p.17. Available at <https://www.sipri.org/yearbook/1972>

³ Harkavy R.E. The Arms Trade and International Systems, Cambridge, MA: Ballinger. 1975. p 11.

⁴<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/203/36/pdf/n2320336.pdf?token=qW11czbfZeQc2ZYbxV&fe=true>

The December 2021 edition of the World Journal of military spending and arms transfers covers an eleven-year period from 2009 to 2019. It publishes detailed, comprehensive and statistical data on military spending, arms transfers, armed forces and related economic data for each country in the world each year, as well as in-depth analyses of arms exchanges and distribution trends. Over a ten-year period, the annual value of permanent world military spending has increased from approximately 1 percent to 11 percent, from \$ 1.82 trillion in 2009 to \$ 2.66 trillion. These indicators came about as a result of Wmeat's use of five different methods to convert military spending into US dollars by nations other than the United States. The spending in the ten-year period cited above, if compared to the amount of real bzoor exchange, accounted for a much lower share of military spending than in 1989, at the end of the Cold War, which was about 4.7 percent.⁵

The number of people serving in the world armed forces decreased by nearly 3% during the period covered in WMEAT 2021, from 21.1 million in 2009 to 20.4 million in 2019, and 20.2 million in 2016. From 2009 to 2019, the total number of armed forces personnel in the world decreased by almost 14% per capita, from about 0.31% of the total population to about 0.27%. This has decreased by nearly 13 percent as a proportion of the workforce, showing a decrease from 0.68 percent in 2009 to approximately 0.59 percent in 2019.⁶ It is also seen that during the ten-year period, world military spending per member of the armed forces, i.e. demand for the military, increased from 4 to 15 percent. In every economic, political group of all countries except North America, East Africa and South Africa, and in all regions, one can see an increase in military spending per member of the armed forces.

The global annual cost of international arms shipments rose from \$ 169 billion in 2009 to approximately \$ 212 billion in 2019, an increase of approximately 25 percent. The share of arms trade in goods and services in World Trade appears to be between 0.8 percent and approximately 1.0 percent, with an average of 0.9 percent of World Trade, with no apparent trend of growth or decline.

During the eleven-year period covered in WMEAT 2021, it can be seen that nearly 79% of World arms trade was supplied by the United States, about 10% by the European Union, about 5% by Russia, and less than 2% by China. During this period, there is no clear trend in the market share of the United States, the European Union or Russia, but China's market share has grown.⁷ In 2019, US arms exports provide reliable data on an average of 162 collates per year, allowing them to directly assess the current state of the arms industry. SIPRI researchers also analyze data to identify trends and potential impacts on global security.

As of 2022, the SIPRI research institute has the highest military expenditure at the expense of the United States (39%) and France (11%).⁸ A large part of the 100 best weapons manufacturers and military service companies in the world come to the United States. The top ten lists were led by companies such as Lockheed Martin Corporation of the United States, Raytheon Technologies,

⁵ <https://www.state.gov/world-military-expenditures-and-arms-transfers-2021-edition/>

⁶ <https://www.state.gov/world-military-expenditures-and-arms-transfers-2021-edition/>

⁷ Arms transfers . Available at <https://www.state.gov/world-military-expenditures-and-arms-transfers-2021-edition/>

⁸ <https://www.sipri.org/research/armament-and-disarmament/arms-and-military-expenditure/military-expenditure>

Northrop Grumman Corporation, Boeing, General Dynamics Corporation, BAE Systems, NORINCO of China, AVIC, CASC, and Rostec of Russia.⁹

The stability of the receiving state can be cited as a risk factor for the purchase of weapons. Many scholars have expressed the view that weak legitimacy, inability to control conflicts within their borders, pose a major threat to the proliferation and misuse of weapons. Research shows that military assistance can increase the likelihood of a military coup, which is more likely in the case of a fragile state. The second risk factor may be the behavior of the state towards its citizens. Nations that place poorly on human rights or regularly use violence against their people increase the risk of misuse of weapons for short or long periods of time. And the last factor is internal and external conflicts in society. Countries dealing with terrorism and rebellion or actively participating in an interstate conflict also represent a high risk of negative consequences such as dispersal, divorce, etc. Although the United States has grounds for supplying weapons to states participating in such conflicts or engaging in terrorism, the risk of negative consequences remains.¹⁰

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⁹ [https://www.sipri.org/visualizations/2024/sipri-top-100-arms-producing-and-military-services-companies-world 2022](https://www.sipri.org/visualizations/2024/sipri-top-100-arms-producing-and-military-services-companies-world-2022)

¹⁰ The Institute for Economics and Peace's Global Terrorism Index is available at <http://economicsandpeace.org/reports/>. The UCDP/PRIO data are available at [https://www.prio.org/Data/Armed Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/](https://www.prio.org/Data/Armed%20Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/)