

COMMITTEE GUIDE

DISEC



Disarmament and International Security Committee

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CCBMUN **XXIII**

Contents

1. Presidents' Letter

2. Topic 1: *Restrictions on the international trade of weapons with countries involved in ongoing belligerent conflicts*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Guiding Questions
- V. Bibliography

3. Topic 2: *Control of Sonic Weapons*

- I. History/Context
- II. Current Situation
- III. Key Points of the Debate
- IV. Guiding Questions
- V. Bibliography



1. Presidents' Letter

Dear Delegates,

First of all, we would like to express how happy we are to be your presidents in this model. We look forward to getting to know each of you, helping you out with any problems you might have, and giving you a tranquil experience as we welcome each of you to this committee. We are Samuel Gómez and Andrés Quiroz, currently 10th grade students at Colegio Colombo Británico in Cali, and we are pleased to serve as your presidents in this CCBMUN XXIII. We have participated in six models each, with both of us winning the award of best portfolio.

In this version of CCBMUN, as part of the Disarmament and International Security Council, DISEC, you will discuss the use and regulation of weapons, a matter of huge importance, leading to decisions that can prevent further belligerent conflicts, social disruption, and violations of human rights. As delegates, your responsibility will be to give the perspectives of the delegation you represent, in order to unite and find viable solutions that follow agreements made in this international community. In order for the committee to develop a debate, we encourage you to bring your best interventions; do not be afraid to participate, and stand up for your country's position to become an excellent delegate.

DISEC is a mixed committee, and we are aware that this may be your first experience in a mixed committee. Thus, we understand that some of you might feel intimidated or unprepared for this task, however we will be with you throughout the process, so do not hesitate to contact us if you need help along the way. Likewise, this will be our first experience as presidents of a MUN and, just like you, we look forward to this model as an experience for growth. So we want to invite you to use this model as an opportunity to challenge yourselves; to learn and grow as delegates and as people in the debate. We assure you the development of this committee will serve as a remarkable experience for all of us. Finally, all that is left is to wait for the model. We wish you the best of luck during the development of your research and performance in the debate!

Kind regards,

Andrés Quiroz and Samuel Gómez

DISEC Chair

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Topic 1: Restrictions on the international trade of weapons with countries involved in ongoing belligerent conflicts

I. History/Context

Since the end of WWII, the international trade of arms (including firearms, explosives, and artillery) has been a constant and active branch of the economic relationship between many countries, especially between massive producers and buyers due to ongoing armed conflicts or social tensions.

During a belligerent conflict, the arms trade - the international sale or transfer of weapons and military equipment - is a crucial factor that affects the outcome of the conflict. By strengthening military capacity, it often fuels and prolongs the violence. However, such weapons may also be supplied to a country facing special circumstances, enabling it to defend itself against insurgents, internal unrest or external aggression. When a nation lacks adequate domestic production, this supply becomes essential for its defence, creating dependence on the seller.

The international market of military weapons is one of the most lucrative, but also one of the most sensitive industries in the world; after WWII, the massive proliferation of arms demonstrated how global-scale levels of production could destabilize entire nations, causing a giant gap between the military capacity of large buyers/producers, compared with smaller nations. Furthermore, these conflicts led to the production of new, more lethal weapons, such as armoured tanks, mortars, armed airplanes, automatic/semi-automatic rifles, machine guns, anti-personnel mines, among many others. Most of these wartime innovations were developed by countries under a great level of military pressure at the time - Germany, the United States of America, France, the United Kingdom and Japan. These countries also played an important role in the first great international weapons market, where allies such as the US, United Kingdom and France were involved in a military agreement.

Destabilization of Afghanistan

During the Cold War, in 1979, the USSR invaded Afghanistan with the objective of supporting the local government's communist party, which at the time was being



threatened by the Mujahideen, a fundamentalist Islamic insurgent group. Because of the Soviet presence in the area, the United States launched “Operation Cyclone” through the CIA, with the objective of weakening the communist presence; this operation consisted of financing the Mujahideen by supplying funds and firearms, including assault rifles and artillery. However the CIA did not deliver the armament directly, these weapons were delivered through Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). This Pakistani agency also gave shelter and military training to the Mujahideen and favoured Islamic extremist groups, who later became organized into the Taliban. In this operation, Saudi Arabia was a main sponsor, equaling the USA's contribution; it fostered the arrival of the so called “Afghan Arabs”, people such as Osama Bin Laden, who contributed to the combat, gaining prestige amongst the fighters and later co-founding Al Qaeda. To find out more about this operation, please follow the link: [Operation Cyclone](#).



Figure 1: President Ronald Reagan meeting with Afghan Mujahideen leaders in the Oval Office in 1983 (Wikipedia, 1983)

It is important to keep in mind that all of these funds were given to non-state actors with the goal of destabilizing the local government. Operation Cyclone led to the formation of the Taliban in 1994, formed by radicalized former mujahideen soldiers and students from Saudi-funded madrassas (Islamic education institutions) in Pakistan. Al Qaeda's formation benefited from the massive flow of weapons, leading to Osama Bin Laden forming the group in 1988, and enabling them to perpetrate many of their later offences against the West. In conclusion, Operation Cyclone's plan to destabilize the Soviets in Afghanistan by providing military training and equipment to the Mujahideen caused a massive destabilization due to the introduction of those weapons into the local environment, leading to the creation of modern belligerent groups; such as the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban, Al Qaeda and the Haqqani Network.

Destabilization of African countries

Throughout the 20th century, several countries of Africa suffered the repercussions of European colonization; several conflicts arose due to the European drawing of African borders without taking ethnicities and cultures into consideration. This caused very divergent backgrounds and cultures, with different origins, traditions, philosophies, and social organizations to be forced to coexist under a single government that often did not comply with most, or either, of these cultures' ways of thinking. Having many divergent cultures coexist makes it very difficult to build an integrated national identity, or to progress politically, economically, and socially, as this "cultural clash" can often promote feelings of alienation or cultural vindication. This has historically been a cause of disputes over territory and/or independence from a state; in many cases, authoritarian leaders seized control and repressed the opposition, which led to coups and civil conflicts.

During the Cold War, several nations perceived the rising conflicts in the area as an opportunity to export their weapons, as having an active role on the continent contributed to a favourable trade balance. The USSR served as a main exporter to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) in Angola, Ethiopia, and Mozambique, mainly with the objective of having further influence over the African marxist governments. On the other hand, the US favoured anti-communist movements, such as the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), and certain factions of Somalia and Sudan. France came to an agreement to send weapons to its former colonies, such as Rwanda, Chad and Cote d'Ivoire. China exported great quantities of cheap



weapons to Sudan, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia. Israel provided weapons to Ethiopia, Congo, South Sudan and Rwanda.

In short, several countries exploited emerging African conflicts both to expand their influence in the region and to seize lucrative opportunities for arms exports. As tensions rose, cultural clashes intensified, and newly formed societies struggled to establish stability, the influx of weapons only escalated the violence.

Global actions to control the weapons trade

UN Charter's Article 26

Throughout history, especially after WWII, there have been international agreements to regulate the flow, development, possession and usage of weapons during belligerent conflicts. The first notable agreement was the UN's founding, along with the United Nations' charter and specifically article 26, which states:

"In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments." - [UN Charter](#)

All 193 state members of the UN are signatories to this declaration of control to weapon proliferation.

South Africa's weapon embargo

An "embargo", specifically on weapons, is a prohibition of the sale/transfer of weapons and military equipment to a country in the form of sanctions. Sanctions are political and economic actions that one or more countries take out against another country in order to try to change the behaviour of the government in that country.

During apartheid in South Africa, when Black South Africans were denied basic rights, racially motivated violence was fueled by a steady flow of weapons used by authorities to suppress protests and opposition. France, the UK, the US and Germany supplied much of



this weaponry, enabling the state's violent crackdowns. As global condemnation of apartheid grew - intensified by incidents such as the Sharpeville and Soweto massacres, where police opened fire on Black protesters - the UN imposed a mandatory arms embargo. This decision also responded to South Africa's destabilizing role in the region, including its involvement in conflicts in Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Below is a list of all countries that are currently under an arms embargo, as stated by the Security Council and the European Union:

Country	Imposed by	Valid until
Sudan (Darfur)	UN	September 2025
Central African Republic	UN	July 2025
Haití	UN	October 2025
South Sudan	UN	May 2026
Libya	UN	May 2026
Belarus	EU	February 2026
Iran	EU	April 2026
Myanmar	EU	April 2026
Russia	EU	July 2025
Syria	EU	June 2025
Venezuela	EU	January 2025
Zimbabwe	EU	February 2025
North Korea	UN	Undefined
Afghanistan	UN	Undefined
Republic of Congo	EU	July 2025
China	EU	Undefined

Source: SIPRI and UN reports ([1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#))



Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is one of the most widely recognized international agreements on arms control, drafted in response to the increasingly unregulated state of the global weapons market at the time. Written on April 2nd, 2013, by the General Assembly of the UN, the main purpose of the treaty was to prevent the “illicit” use of arms for such things as human rights violations, genocide and belligerent crimes. It was also intended to control illegal weapons traffic.

By signing this treaty, member states must not allow a weapons exchange if they know that it is going to be used to commit any belligerent crime or to violate an arms embargo set by the Security Council. They should also take preventive measures to avoid any weapons falling into the hands of non-authorized users. This can be done, for example, by labeling weapons with a unique identification number, which allows authorities to trace the manufacturer, and which reinforces customs procedures. Furthermore, presenting annual reports to the ATT regarding arms trade activity helps control the illicit manufacture of weapons. Labeling weapons from manufacture helps detect which weapons are manufactured/sold illegally, as they are not reported to the ATT. You can read more about the treaty in the following link: [Arms Trade Treaty](#).

Status of ATT Participation

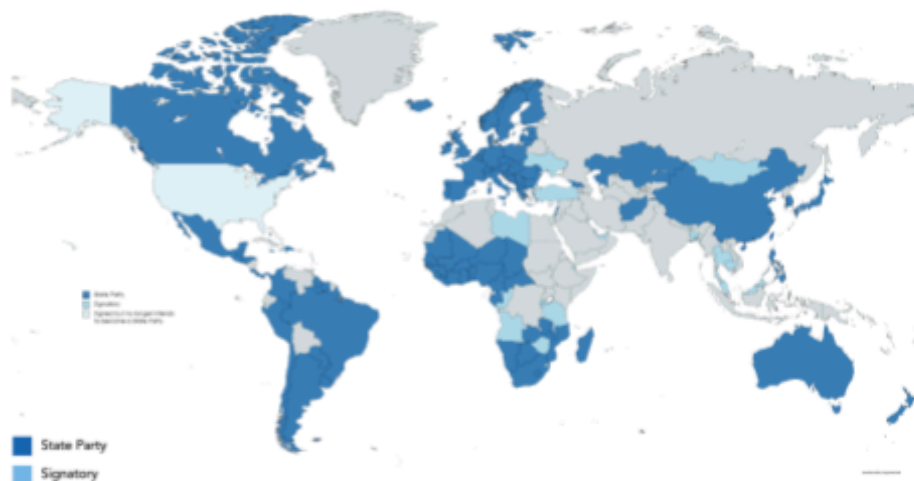


Figure 2: Participant states of the Arms Trade Treaty (2018) ATT (Arms Trade Treaty, 2018)

II. Current Situation

In 2022, the international weapons market had an estimated global value of US\$138,000 million. At the time, several conflicts had not yet escalated to the level that they are now, for example Russia/Ukraine, Israel/Gaza, civil conflicts in Sudan, Myanmar and Yemen, along with other rising tensions in the Middle East.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), between 2019 and 2023, around 63% of the global supply of arms came from only five countries, the US being the biggest exporter with 39% of global sales.

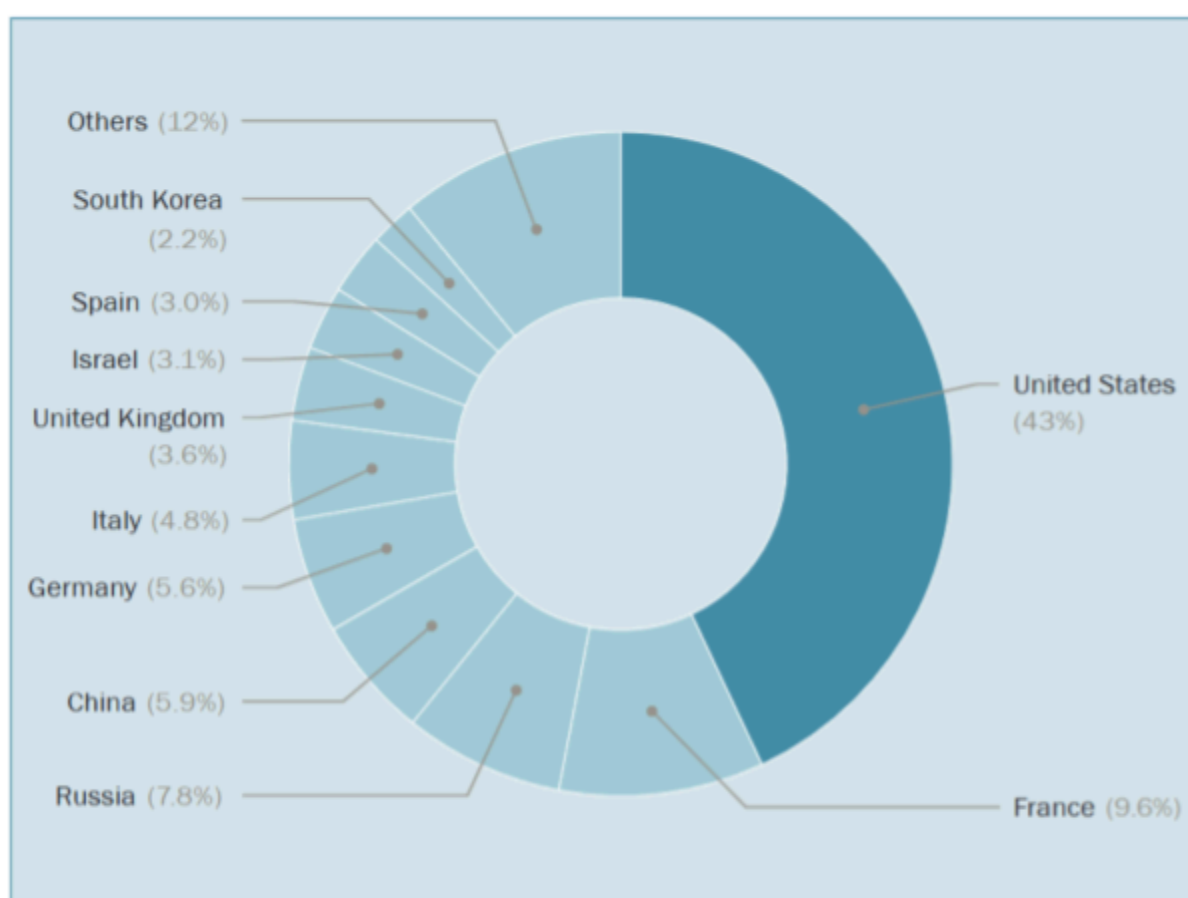


Figure 3: Global Share of exports of major arms by the 10 largest exporters, 2020-24 – SIPRI Arms Transfer Database (Norton & Norton, 2025)



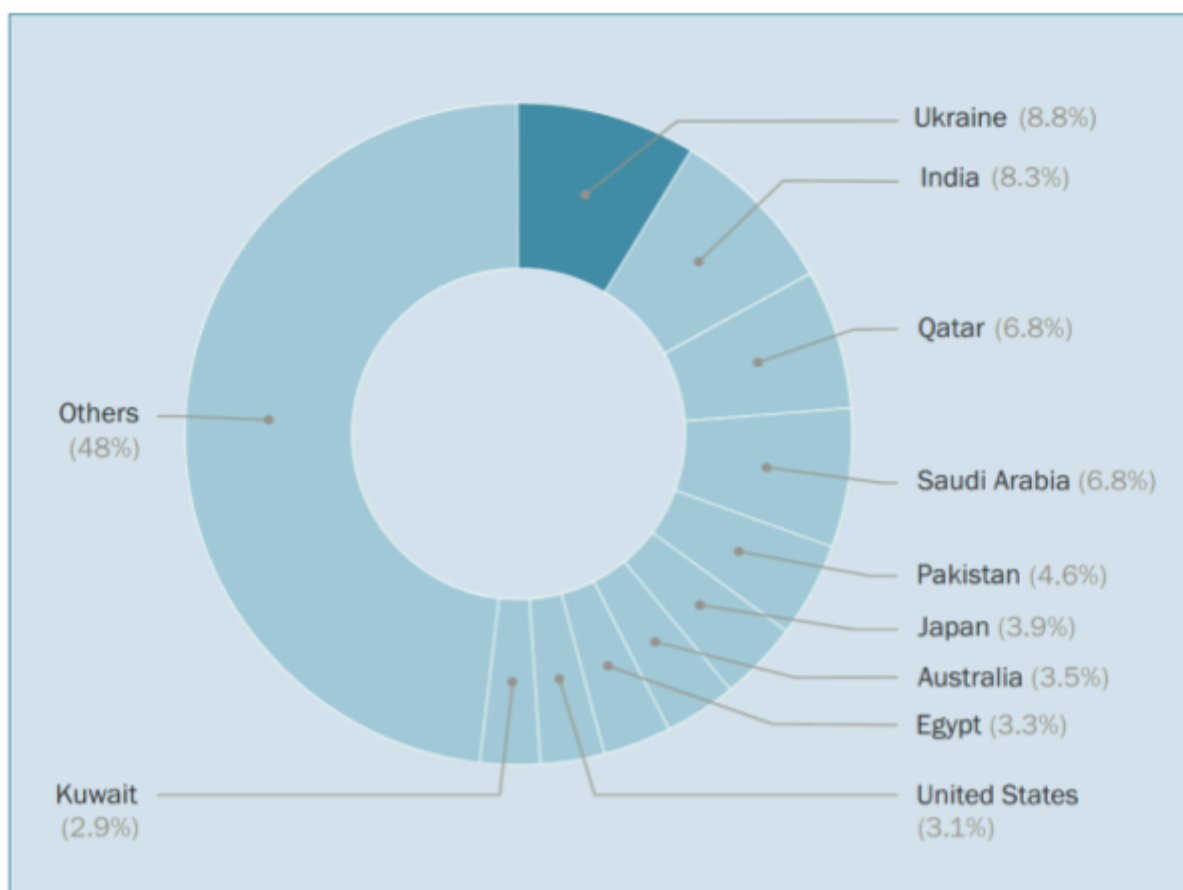


Figure 4: Global share of Imports of major arms by the 10 largest importers, 2020-24 – SIPRI Arms Transfers Database (Norton & Norton, 2025)

For additional information on actors regarding the weapon market follow this link: [Biggest arms dealers in the world](#).

Several countries suffer from repercussions arising from a former conflict that introduced weapons into the area. Flooding a large number of weapons into an unstable environment introduces dangerous possibilities for these weapons to be diverted to non-state actors or to governments for belligerent causes. This debate is not only limited to the instability caused by the arrival of weapons in a country, but also to the moral implications or questioning of the seller/export countries, since they benefit directly by gaining monetary resources, or indirectly by having a higher influence or relationship in the region. Such exports may directly prolong or exacerbate the violence, and exporters may even



knowingly decide to continue with sales, even after embargoes are made, meaning that weapons still reach their destination through clandestine trade deals or through the black market.

Despite good intentions, the ATT requires revision as it has been notably ineffective on several occasions, since it lacks a mechanism of mandatory sanctions. The main problem is that Russia, India and China, the largest exporters of arms, do not abide by this treaty, and the US, although it was initially a signatory, retracted its commitment to the treaty after the beginning of the Ukraine-Russia conflict.

Situation in Ukraine

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the offence and subsequent defence of the country have become the biggest drivers of the international arms trade since the Cold War. However, the whole frame is not represented solely by the weapons sold, but also by the military aid given to Ukraine. In 2023, NATO countries came to an agreement with Ukraine after Ukraine's candidacy to join NATO, which resulted in the possibility of Ukraine joining in the future when it became favorable to do so; to date, Ukraine is not a member of NATO. Due to this, NATO countries responded to Russia's invasion by contributing to Ukraine's defence, sending cost-free weapons and equipment, allowing its defence against Russia's invasion. The USA continues to be the main exporter, with \$70 billion USD in military assistance up to now. To read more about this assistance, please follow the link: [U.S. Security Cooperation with Ukraine](#).

However, several agencies, such as Interpol, have raised concerns about the massive quantities of weapons that have entered the region, especially about how these weapons will be managed after the conflict ends; it is highly probable that they will fall into the hands of non-state actors, as an illegal weapons market. Interpol has asked various countries around the world to use their database to help "trace and detect" weapons.

"Criminal groups try to exploit these chaotic situations and the availability of weapons, even those used by the military and including heavy weapons. These will be available on the criminal market and will create a challenge. No country or region can deal with it in isolation because these groups operate at a global level." – Jürgen Stock, Interpol.



In addition, several officials from the Ukrainian government have been dismissed from the defence ministry because of cases related to corruption involving military contracts, with five major officials being dismissed in a single case. This raises more concerns about NATO's decision to send such a large quantity of military equipment to the country.

Situation in Afghanistan

The repercussions of Operation Cyclone, along with the Saudi intervention in Afghanistan, are still visible and continue to cause damage to millions of civilians on a daily basis. The main strategy of Operation Cyclone was to arm and fund opponents of the Russian regime, which included supporting Islamist extremism and allowing several radicalized fighters to receive military training. After the Soviet withdrawal, a huge amount of military equipment was left in the area: armoured vehicles, military trucks, mortars, heavy artillery, anti-aerial systems, rocket launchers, tanks, and thousands of lightweight arms were all left behind. These remained in the hands of the established Afghan army. A large fraction of the remaining arms left by the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was left to the Mujahideen factions, which fought up to 1992 to bring down the regime. Thanks to the military power they gained, these factions later formed insurgencies like Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

After the events of September 11th, 2001, in the US, the US's military launched an invasion of Afghanistan in order to dismantle Al Qaeda's infrastructure, which was working under the protection of the Taliban regime. The US military had a presence in Afghan territory from 2001 up until 2021. Their main mission was to maintain stable relations between the citizens and the local government, to track down Taliban operations, and to investigate potential insurgencies linked to 9/11. In August 2021, the US declared a total withdrawal from Afghan territory; this withdrawal resulted in the country losing its main security officials, leaving room for the Taliban and insurgent organizations to operate freely. This allowed the Taliban to take authoritarian control over the country's capital city just a few weeks after the US withdrawal. As the local government was left unprepared by the US military, they did not pose a major barrier to the Taliban, which took power with the help of the weapons provided to them years before.

Nowadays, the Taliban operates using several sources of weapons. A weapon batch valued at US\$7000 million was left by the US to the local Afghan government, and this was later



seized by the Taliban. Since 2022, Soviet and NATO weapons have been seen in informal bazaars both in Afghanistan and on the border with Pakistan.

Due to an arms embargo in Afghanistan, supposedly to regulate the flow of weapons falling into insurgent hands, countries may not sell or send weapons of any kind to Afghanistan. However, over the last few years, weapons manufactured in Iran, China, Russia, Pakistan and Türkiye have been appearing. These possibly come from the black market.

In conclusion, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan came to power due to the irresponsible management of the weapons market during the late 20th century, which allowed the arms to fall into insurgent hands. Nowadays, weapons manufactured in diverse countries keep appearing in Afghan territory, possibly coming from clandestine sales or from insurgent groups from the rest of the Middle East.



Figure 5: Taliban fighters stand next to a fraction of a weapon cargo.
(<https://www.facebook.com/middleeastmonitor>, 2023)

In addition to the above problems, there have been several registered cases in which weapons left unsupervised by a local government were taken by insurgent groups or other non-state actors, specifically re-sellers. For example, during the last few years some of the US weapons, which were seized by the Taliban after the US withdrawal, have been found being sold to other insurgent groups in Gaza, smuggled on the black market.

Tensions caused by civil conflicts in North Africa

Nowadays, major conflicts remain active in divided countries in Africa; some have not yet been resolved or have evolved over the years since the Cold War, others have appeared due to new borders, agreements, culture mixing, etc.

There are several cases which can be attributed to carelessly distributed lands, which end up causing civil conflicts and raising the need for military equipment. For example, Sudan has had a lengthy history of civil conflict, which resulted in the independence of the southern region to become South Sudan in 2011. In recent years, the SAF (Sudanese Army) and the RSF (Rapid Support Forces; a militia led by paramilitary forces) have fought to seek control of the local government after 2 military coups and failed attempts at democratic elections.

Intervention from supplier countries has taken an important role in fueling this and almost every other civil conflict in Africa. In the case of the Sudan coup, Amnesty International found that recently manufactured or recently transferred weapons and ammunition from countries including China, Russia, Serbia, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Yemen were being imported in large quantities to Sudan. In addition, it is important to note that several arms embargoes have been made on this and other countries; since 1994, the EU has maintained a general embargo that includes the entire territory of Sudan, covering arms, ammunition, military vehicles and defence components, however it has not achieved the desired effect.

In conclusion, the global arms export market remains highly concentrated, with the United States, Russia, France and China clearly dominating the field. This concentration of export power directly contributes to the prolongation and exacerbation of global conflicts, as arms supplies to state and non-state actors can escalate violence. Furthermore,





Figure 6: Members of the Rapid Support Forces in Khartoum, possessing weapons provided by sellers in 2019. –Yasuyoshi Chiba/Agence France-Presse

regulatory efforts such as the ATT have proven ineffective in controlling the problem, especially where major exporters such as the USA, Russia, India, and China are concerned. To see a table of where arms trafficking is most endemic, please follow the link: [Ranking by Arms trafficking](#).

III. Key points of the debate

- Effective control over the weapons market of countries in conflict
- Autonomy for major weapons for major buyers and sellers of weapons to trade on the global market
- Limited effectiveness of the ATT
- Creation of agreements to control the production of weapons in order to limit clandestine and untrackable weapon sales
- The hidden consequences of military aid during times of conflict and post-conflict
- Post-conflict recovery regarding the localization and management of weapons

IV. Guiding questions

1. Is your country a main exporter or importer of belligerent weapons?
2. How does your country benefit from arms exports/imports?
3. Has your country ever exported weapons to countries in ongoing belligerent conflicts?
4. Has your country received a large supply of weapons from distributor governments whilst involved in an armed conflict?
5. Has your country made any calls to regulate the weapons trade?
6. Is your country currently in a belligerent conflict? If so, what has been the role of sponsor nations?
7. Is or has your country been militarily dependent on another nation? If not, has your country been dependent on another country's supply of weapons?
8. What proposals does your delegation have to regulate the sale of belligerent weapons to countries in conflict?

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IMAGES

Figure #1; President Ronald Reagan meeting with Afghan Mujahideen leaders in the Oval Office in 1983: colaboradores de Wikipedia. (s. f.). *Archivo:Reagan sitting with people from the Afghanistan-Pakistan region in February 1983.jpg* - Wikipedia, la enciclopedia libre.

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Figure #2; Participant states of the Arms Trade Treaty: *Treaty Status*. (s. f.). ARMS TRADE TREATY.

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Figure #3 and #4; Global Share of exports/imports of major arms by the 10 largest exporters/importers: Norton, B. (2025, 14 marzo). USA is #1 arms dealer, exporting 43% of the world's weapons: 7 times more than China, 5x Russia. Geopolitical Economy Report.

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Figure #5; Taliban fighters stand next to a fraction of a weapon cargo: Israel: US arms left in Afghanistan reach Gaza. (2023, 18 junio). Middle East Monitor.

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20230617-israel-us-arms-left-in-afghanistan-reach-gaza/>

Figure #6; Members of the Rapid Support Forces in Khartoum: Who are the Rapid Support Forces, the paramilitaries fighting Sudan's Army? (2023). *New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/17/world/africa/paramilitary-rsf-explainer.html>



Topic 2: Control of Sonic Weapons

I. History/Context

The term “sonic weapon”, also called acoustic weapon or ultrasonic weapon, refers to a military grade non-lethal device that utilizes sound waves of different wavelengths, either audible or inaudible (ultrasonic or infrasonic); the purpose of these weapons is to incapacitate, distract, injure, and/or disperse a person or group of people by emitting a sound wave that causes intense pain or discomfort.

These weapons can project sound in a direct beam or open field, and range from less damaging tools used, for example, in crowd control, to devices just powerful enough to cause mild physical harm, such as disorientation and immobility due to eardrum harm, to more powerful devices that reach advanced military-grade, powerful enough to cause eardrum ruptures if caught in close range.

An “ultrasonic weapon” refers to all devices that use high-frequency sound waves. The average healthy human ear can detect frequencies in a range between 20 Hz and 20,000 Hz (20kHz); an ultrasound refers to a frequency over 20 kHz. Ultrasonic weapons utilize wavelengths between 25 kHz and 30 kHz for effective incapacitation in normal situations. More advanced devices can reach frequencies of around 300 kHz, which is sufficient to rupture eardrums and heat body tissue. This heating can cause momentary hyperthermia, trigger intense hormonal and psychological stress responses, and produce severe pain that completely immobilizes the target.

At the other end of the spectrum, *infrasound* refers to frequencies below 20 Hz, which are generally inaudible to humans but can still be perceived through bodily resonance (when a part of the human body naturally vibrates in response to an external sound or vibration that matches its natural frequency). Infrasonic weapons usually emit a frequency of between 0.5 Hz and 8 Hz. Internal organs often resonate within the 4–8 Hz range, and prolonged exposure can cause this resonance to intensify, potentially deforming or damaging tissue, impairing organ function, and, in extreme cases, resulting in death.

The first notable presentation of what is considered to be a modern sonic weapon can be found in the “Titan” ultrasound weapon, developed by Hungarian veteran, Kálmán Tihaiyi,



in 1940. It consisted of a 2-metre parabolic reflector that served as an amplifier for any nearby sounds, potentially reaching 4-8 km. Even if this device was a prototype that did not reach military usage, it became a foundation for what modern sonic weapons would become.

During the Cold War, between 1960 and 1990, several prototypes of ultrasonic and infrasonic weapons emerged as a result of an initiative to explore new areas of military engineering in different countries. These new types of weapons were mainly investigated by the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union, with the idea of being more advanced than their rival country.

In 1957, French scientist Vladimir Gavreau, developed infrasonic pipes, allegedly 23m long and 1.8 metres wide, which served as amplifiers for whistles and sounds. The researchers were continually falling ill, and it was discovered that the pipes produced frequencies between 3 and 7 Hz, capable of causing nausea, eye pressure and pain. According to Gavreau's notes, these frequencies also produced structural tremors and, during one test, caused nearby buildings to shake.

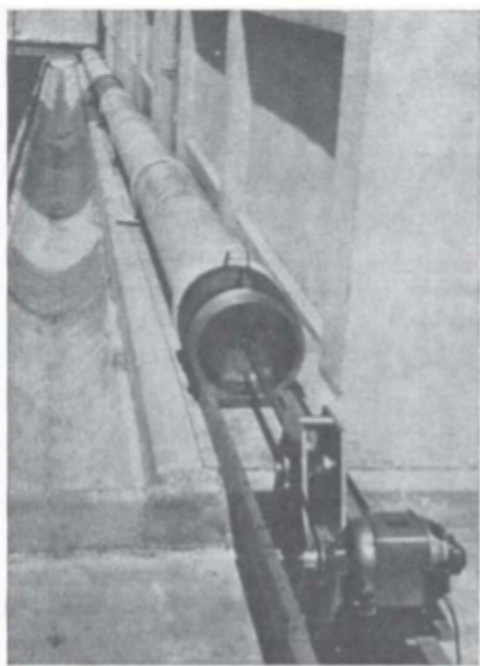


Figure 1: Gavreau's infrasound pipes; 1957 (Bowdler, 2018)

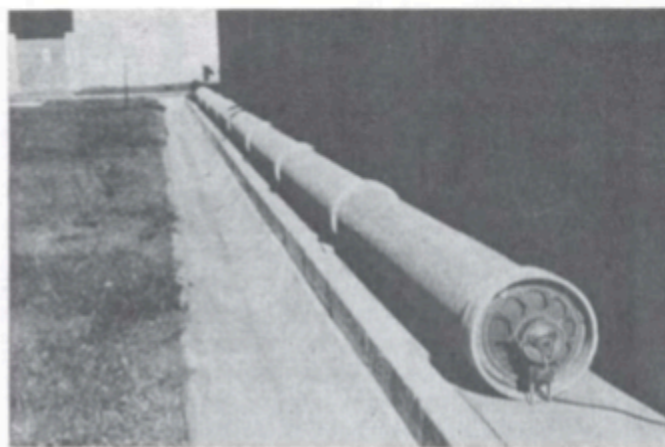


Figure 2: Pistonphone & Loudspeaker drive; 1957 (Bowdler, 2018)

During the 1970s, the UK and USA explored different ultrasonic and infrasonic devices. Among them was the “Squawk Box”, used by the British Army, to produce ultrasounds of around 16 kHz that caused severe discomfort and disorientation. In 1973, a 1-metre Squawk Box mounted on a Land Rover was tested in Lisburn on real soldiers. Test subjects described the experience as causing “creepy” and psychologically disturbing sensations such as instant disorientation, nausea, dizziness, and temporary loss of consciousness.

One of the first applications of LRADs (Long-Range Acoustic Devices), was in the Vietnam War, where the United States army developed a campaign called “Urban Funk Campaign.” This was a campaign that used psychoacoustic attacks in helicopters against Vietnamese troops, combining infrasounds ($\approx 7\text{Hz}$) and ultrasounds. The objective of these attacks was to cause feelings of fear and anxiety or even, in some cases, physical harm.

Although the “Urban Funk Campaign” was one of the first cases in which LRADs were used in a belligerent conflict, one of the first cases where they were used in the context in which they are mainly used today, which is stopping or controlling protests, occurred in 2009. It was used by the US police department in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to repel antiglobalization demonstrators protesting at the G20 summit. A video from the event shows protesters covering their ears and backing away as the truck-mounted LRAD, resembling a satellite dish, emits a high-pitched noise, similar to a car alarm. The LRAD can also be used to transmit spoken messages across long distances. In Pittsburgh, police used the LRAD to warn protesters to evacuate the city streets surrounding the summit site.

II. Current Situation

Modern Sonic Weapons usually come in three main forms: the long-range acoustic device (LRAD); ultrasonic weapons (USW); and infrasonic weapons. An LRAD is a portable sound cannon that emits highly directional sound, classified as a non-lethal weapon; these are meant to produce an audible sound with a high intensity, meant to cause pain. Ultrasonic Weapons (USW) are devices made to emit high-frequency ($<20\text{ kHz}$) sound waves that can potentially cause close-range damage to eardrums and body tissue. Infrasonic weapons are those devices that emit lower frequencies, impossible for the human ear to perceive ($<20\text{ Hz}$), but are meant to cause disorientation.



In 2023, the global Long-Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) market size was valued at approximately \$1.2 billion USD, and it is projected to reach \$3.5 billion USD by 2032. The growth of the LRAD market can be attributed to the increased demand for advanced communications technologies in defence and law enforcement applications, as well as the rising need for crowd control and mass notification systems. The device formally known as a Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) is primarily manufactured by the American company Genasys, the global leader in LRAD production and distribution. Although other manufacturers exist, such as Ultra Electronics, Genasys remains the primary supplier for numerous buyers worldwide. LRADs emit highly focused sound waves with frequencies between 2 kHz and 4 kHz, reaching sound pressure levels of 160–162 dB at a distance of 1 metre. Multiple versions are available, ranging from fully portable units to models mounted on military or naval vehicles. These devices typically have an effective range of 5,500–6,000 metres.

LRADs may be used for other reasons, such as scaring wildlife away, but this debate is only about sonic weapon usage meant for targeting people.

Sonic weapons for control of protests

As they are classified as non-lethal weapons, the deployment of sonic weapons has been used to control civil disturbances during the last two decades. This is because their effects mainly focus on disorienting and incapacitating the target, helping authorities to maintain security and completely disperse manifestations, if necessary.

It is important to note that LRAD devices can also function as conventional loudspeakers that do not emit harmful frequencies. For example, several authorities, including the police departments of Australia and New Zealand, use LRADs to communicate with citizens - particularly during protests - in order to provide instructions and to prevent disturbances. This non-harmful communication role is the most common application of LRAD. This is the most common use of LRAD deployment. ISW (Infrasonic weapons) are not used in crowd control, as they are limited by safety constraints. USWs (Ultrasonic weapons) are rarely used in open crowd control due to health concerns.

Below are some brief examples of situations in which sonic weapons have been deployed on civil manifestations:



US 2016/2020 Protests

During the well-known case of the death of US citizen, George Floyd, and the ensuing demonstrations that occurred around the country, especially in Memphis, Tennessee, and New York, the police department deployed LRADs in crucial moments to disperse the crowds that were causing extreme disruptions. LRADs had also been used before by the New York Police Department, highlighting a case in 2014, when protesters sued police for



Figure 3: NYPD Officers use the LRAD to give announcements to a crowd in Washington Square Park on Oct. 24, 2015

using the device at close range, claiming permanent hearing damage. Follow this link to learn more about the case: [Plug your ears and Run](#)

The ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) and other civil rights groups have criticized the use of LRADs because of their potential to cause excessive harm, and for violating constitutional rights to peaceful protest.

Cuba's Havana Syndrome situation

A group of U.S. diplomats in Havana, Cuba, experienced severe hearing loss, which officials believe may have been caused by a sonic weapon. Some diplomats had to end their assignments early and return to the U.S. for treatment. This alleged attack may have been caused by an infrasonic weapon, because the US diplomats said that they didn't actually hear anything, and the hearing loss was unexplained. The Cuban government denied using any such device against embassy officials.

Serbia

On March 25, 2025, during a silent protest in Belgrade, Serbia, protesters described how, during a short duration, they began hearing an extremely loud “whiz” noise that seemed to be moving towards them; it was too brief to cause significant damage to nearby

protesters, but it allegedly caused shock, dizziness, nausea, headaches and hearing problems. The crowd was sent into a panic because it seemed as if a plane or train was approaching, and this led to various injuries.



Figure 4: Serbian Gendarmerie officers show the U.S.-made LRAD – which is illegal in Serbia and many other countries, in Belgrade, Serbia, March 19, 2025

The Serbian police denied having used sound weapons, as these are illegal in the country. However, later on, a picture appeared of Serbian officials holding, and apparently utilizing, US-made LRAD devices on vehicles and in portable form. Although it was never confirmed that they had been used during the protest, it raised local concerns about civil safety regarding the use of these weapons.

India



Figure 5: Authorities equipping vehicles with LRADs to disperse Delhi protests, February 2024.

Indian police approved the use of sonic cannons (LRADs) as an alternative to using pellet cartridges to disperse protesters in Kashmir; this was in response to the aggressive behaviour similar protesters had presented towards the authorities on previous occasions. It was described as a sonic weapon capable of causing permanent hearing damage,



nausea, anxiety and physical discomfort. During the farmers' protests in Delhi, February 2024, Delhi Police deployed LRADs not only for warnings, but also to emit intense sonic blasts that sought to disrupt and disperse protesters.

Other countries

The USA, New Zealand, Poland, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada, Türkiye, France, China, Israel, Serbia and Australia have all acquired sonic weapons to allegedly control crowds, demonstrations, and possible insurgency.

Other countries have already implemented sonic weapons in their military equipment, especially in their navy, since it allows for better communication in a noisy environment. In some cases (mostly in European countries bordering Asia and Africa) sonic weapons have been deployed at borders to control illegal immigration. Examples of such countries are the USA, Greece, Japan, the UK, Israel, Norway, the Philippines, Romania, South Africa, Sweden and Vietnam.

Initial applications for belligerent situations

Greater concerns arise when we consider the possibility of a military application of sonic weapons in belligerent situations, especially considering the almost instant effect intense ultrasonic and infrasonic frequencies have on the body.

One of the first modern cases of application of sonic weapons in zones of belligerent tension was in 2004, when the US military took experimental LRADs as naval equipment to Iraq during their intervention. Although there was no record of it being used, the possibility of it being used on civilians or other militia raises concerns about these weapons.

On November 5, 2005, the luxury cruise ship Seabourn Spirit employed an LRAD device to repel pirates who attacked the vessel with rocket-propelled grenades about 115 kilometres off the coast of Somalia.

Initial applications like this are slowly introducing military-grade sound cannons to what could be the deployment of lethal or more powerful acoustic weapons in the future.



Calls and concerns about the use of sonic weapons

Nowadays, having seen the effects of exposure to a sonic weapon's soundwaves (nausea, migraine, brain damage, damage due to resonance, tissue heating, eardrum blasting, hearing loss, etc.), awareness and concerns about the further deployment and development of more advanced weaponry of this type have arisen over the last decade.

What alarms the international community is that, since this is a relatively new technology, there have not been any treaties or international agreements that regulate sonic weapons in any manner, making them completely legal in most countries, with some even allowing them for civilian acquisition. To date, only Serbia and Poland have passed a law to ban the use of sonic weapons by their authorities, and many more do not allow civilians to acquire them.

In conclusion, sonic devices such as LRADs have presented massive growth in commercial expansion and military use, coupled with the international regulatory vacuum, turns them into powerful tools that can easily be diverted into repressive scenarios. Their ability to immobilize and cause harm to a human target, even when non-lethal, demands an urgent debate about the ethical, legal, and liability limits of states and manufacturers regarding their use, development, and future production to be used in civil conflicts and belligerent.

III. Key points of the debate

- Advances in the technology of sonic weapons
- The use of sonic weapons in belligerent conflicts
- The use of sonic weapons against civilians
- The deployment of sonic weapons and human rights
- The creation of an international agreement to control the development, sale, and use of sonic weapons



IV. Guiding questions

1. Does your country currently possess any kind of LRADs? If so, in which situations have they been used? If not, is the government considering investing in these types of weapons?
2. Does your country believe that the deployment of non-lethal sonic weapons for crowd control is a violation of human rights or a legitimate tool of law enforcement?
3. Would your country support the implementation of acoustic weapons for belligerent causes?
4. Should the international community define and categorise acoustic and sonic weapons separately from conventional non-lethal arms, due to the potential health hazards they present?
5. What distinguishes non-lethal sonic weapons from conventional weapons under international law?
6. What proposals does your delegation have regarding the future regulation of sonic weapons? Should the international community restrict the development, transfer, or export of sonic weapons?

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