



PORG Model United Nations 2018

Disarmament and International Security committee research paper

Content

Introduction	2
Definition of key terms	2
General overview	2-3
Regional situation	3-4
Major parties involved	4
Timeline of key events and previous attempts to resolve the issue	4-5
Appendix	5-6
Bibliography	6

Establishing formal mechanisms to prevent the diversion of arms from developed countries to conflict zones in the Middle East and North Africa

Introduction

Conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa continue to be fuelled by the import of foreign arms from Europe and North America, which often end up on opposing sides of the struggle sooner rather than later. With the civil war in Libya and on a larger scale the Syrian conflict being supplied by freshly minted armaments made in Eastern Europe, it is paramount that even with the ATT (Arms Trade Treaty) in place, practical means to curb the illicit transfer of weapons to organizations that could possibly violate human rights and threaten regional stability are put in place. Furthermore, it is necessary that if arms indeed do find themselves in high-risk combat zones, they need to be accounted for in every possible way in order to prevent proliferation among extremist groups in the Middle East and North Africa.

Definition of key terms

“Arms diversion”

Arms diversion is the process by which holdings or transfers of arms that are authorized by relevant states (and are subject to their legal controls) are delivered to unauthorized end-users, or are put to unauthorized uses by authorized end-users.¹

“Formal Mechanism:

Formal mechanisms derive their structure and power from the laws, policies, and regulations made by the government. They operate as a part of the government and are funded by the state. Their function is to interpret and resolve conflicts about the laws, as well as determine responsibility for violations of the laws.²

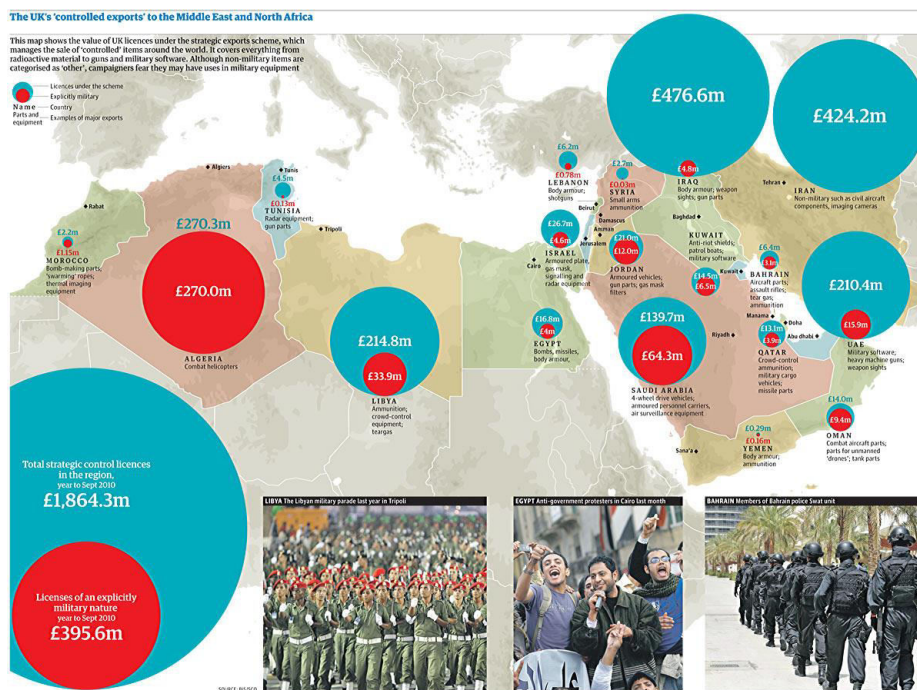
General Overview

The diversion of arms is a crucial problem in the undeveloped countries. It has been proven that arms trading has set back the development of many LEDC's. Multimillion arms trading is still taking place all around the world making progress in state's economy stagnant. Many developed states contribute to fueling disputes

¹ <https://www.saferworld.org.uk/.../BtB%20Diversion%20Feb%2009%20rev.pdf>

² <http://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/880-formal-justice-mechanisms.html>

in the Middle East and North Africa by supplying non-state actors with weaponry. By supplying undeveloped states with said weaponry current situation in said states deteriorates. The human cost is massive since these arms are often used to commit violence against human rights, not for protection of its holder. There have been previous attempts to lower the diversion of SALWs³, however, as it has proven, these attempts have failed to eliminate arms being transported into conflict areas. Said weapons come primarily from Europe and North America. The effect these weapons have on the situation could be seen for example in Libya during the 14-year civil war, or in Syria, where non-state actors are provided with arms that cause massive damage. In this region, the arms were imported there by the US, which aimed to fight ISIS by supplying rebel groups with weaponry, these weapons have however then been a part of illicit arms trading within the country, therefore, completely unhelpful.



Regional

Situation

4

³ <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/salw/>

⁴ <https://static.guim.co.uk/sys-images/Guardian/Pix/photobylines/2011/2/22/1298371350048/Middle-East-arms-sales-gr-008.jpg>

Photo 1

North Africa

Due to the diversion of arms in North Africa (and Africa in general) conflicts are being fuelled, since extremist groups are provided with weaponry that is used for the violation of human rights. Instead of helping and protecting the citizens of these countries. In Libya diversion of arms helped to intensify the 14 year long civil war.

Middle East

In the Middle East diversion of arms has increased by 84% in the span of one year. In some areas like Saudi Arabia, the import of arms has tripled increasing it from 54 million dollars to 161 million. In Qatar import increased eight times. Another pressing issue is the redistribution and re-export of imported arms, which is taking place in both the Middle East and North Africa. Namely, arms imported to Qatar are then re-exported to Libya, even though Qatar signed an agreement stating that it was not to re-export weapons. The majority of parties involved have transparency regarding their arms import.

Major Parties Involved

The parties, which play the most important role include:

North Africa:

In North Africa, the major parties include Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, and Morocco.

Middle East:

In the Middle East, all the countries are involved in this issue. See photo one on page three, which offers a more precise insight on arms trading in said area. The main party involved is the Syrian Arab Republic.

Others:

Other major parties include the United States of America, United Kingdom, Italy and Germany. Which are the high-income countries which distribute arms into conflict areas.

Timeline of key events and previous attempts to resolve the issue

There have been previous attempts in the past which have aimed to eliminate or lower the diversion of arms into undeveloped countries. Multiple treaties and agreements have been signed, however, as it has proven over the course of a few years they have been unhelpful and failed to solve the issue at hand.

- The Arms Trade Treaty⁵- this treaty came into existence in 2014 and strived for the regulation of international trade of arms
- CTITF- the UN Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force includes clauses about the diversion of arms
- European parliament implemented an embargo on diversion of arms into the Middle East

Appendix

<https://unoda-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/English7.pdf>

<https://www.un.org/counterterrorism/ctitf/en/about-task-force>

<http://www.un.org/press/en/2006/dc3032.doc.htm>

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2013/sc11087.doc.htm>

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<http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/11/06/the-messaging-app-fueling-syrias-insurgency-telegram-arms-weapons/>

⁵ <https://unoda-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/English7.pdf>