



# ARMS SALES TOPIC: AFFIRMATIVE

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Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reduce Direct Commercial Sales and/or Foreign Military Sales of arms from the United States. A look at possible affirmative cases provided by Rich Edwards, Baylor University



# REDUCE ARMS SALES TO AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

- Democracies promote peace and observe human rights; authoritarian regimes do the opposite.
- The U.S., according to Freedom House, provides arms to 73% of the world's dictators.
- The U.S. should stop arming authoritarian regimes (this was the national Lincoln-Douglas topic in Jan/Feb 2019)

Joel Day, (Security Fellow, Truman National Security Project), LOS ANGELES TIMES, Oct. 26, 2018, A13.

Congress should enact a new code of conduct to make compliance mandatory, not voluntary, in four key areas. The United States needs to ban arms deals to dictators and rogue regimes. It is utterly wrong for the blood of political prisoners and dissidents to be on the hands of American taxpayers. Arms deals should be restricted to countries that respect human rights.





# REDUCE ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA

- The U.S. is a major provider of arms to Saudi Arabia.
- Saudi Arabia uses U.S. arms to commit war crimes by the bombing of civilians in Yemen.
- The U.S. should reduce arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Oona Hathaway, (Prof., Law, Yale Law School), HARVARD NATIONAL SECURITY JOURNAL, 2018, 58.

If the United States is aiding and assisting the Saudi-led coalition in its violation of international humanitarian law, as we previously concluded is likely, then the United States is not only in violation of its responsibilities under State Responsibility doctrine, but also its well-accepted obligation not to aid and assist violations under Common Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions.





# REDUCE ARMS SALES TO TAIWAN

- The U.S. policy of containment and its refusal to accept the rise of China will inevitably lead to war.
- The U.S. continues to sell arms to Taiwan with increasing regularity in the Trump administration – a highly provocative policy that embodies the U.S. commitment to containment.
- The U.S. should reduce its arms sales to Taiwan.

Cheng-Yi Lin, (Research Fellow, Institute of European and American Studies, Taiwan). TAIWAN AND THE “CHINA IMPACT,” 2016, 268.

In recent years, Beijing has watched with interest the debate within the US on whether to abandon Taiwan. Charles Glaser, a professor at George Washington University, believes that the rise of China might lead China and the US into a conventional and nuclear arms race if the US continues to sell arms to Taiwan.





# REDUCE SALES OF ARMED DRONES

- The use of drones makes war more likely by making it more thinkable; armed drones turn war into a video game.
- The U.S. is the major world user of drones and the Trump administration is ramping up the sale of armed drones.
- The sale of armed drones should be reduced.

Hugh Gusterson, (Prof., International Affairs, George Washington U.), *DRONE: REMOTE CONTROL WARFARE*, 2016, 147.

Whatever we call what drones do—slaughter, hunting, aerial police work, targeted killing, state terrorism, warfare—these machines and their operators are remaking the world in significant ways. They are enabling a kind of permanent, low-level military action that threatens to erase the boundary between war and peace and, in its departure from classic war, is not easily contained or regulated by either the War Powers Act or the UN Charter.





# REDUCE THE SALE OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

- Small arms do most of the killing in armed conflicts throughout the world.
- The U.S. – already the world’s leader in the selling of armaments – is now trying to deregulate the selling of assault weapons by moving them from the U.S. Munitions List (where Congressional notification is required) and placing them instead on the Commerce Control List (where no notice is required).

Jennifer Erickson, (Prof., Political Science, Boston College), DANGEROUS TRADE: ARMS EXPORTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION, 2015, 2.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) and major conventional weapons (MCW) are responsible for the vast majority of conflict deaths, frequently associated with societal instability, and commonly involved in human rights violations. Calls to control the spread of small arms, now referred to as "the real weapons of mass destruction," and major conventional arms have become widespread in the past decade.





# RE-SIGN AND ACCEDE TO (OR RATIFY) THE ARMS TRADE TREATY

- The U.S. helped negotiate the Arms Trade Treaty and was one of its original signers, but the Senate has refused to ratify it. Now President Trump announced before a cheering NRA audience that he is “un-signing” the Arms Trade Treaty.
- The Arms Trade Treaty offers the best hope for stopping the worst abuses in the world arms trade, where arms sellers promote human rights abuses and feed both sides of regional conflicts.

Rita Emch, (Journalist, Switzerland), ARMS SALES, TREATIES, AND VIOLATIONS, 2019, 169.

The United States is the world's largest arms dealer. So US support and ratification of the accord is essential to its success. According to Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Washington-based Arms Control Association, formal support from the United States gives the treaty the potential to change the very nature of the global arms trade.





# REDUCE U.S. SALES OF BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEMS

- Sale of Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) systems such as the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system increase the risk of accidental nuclear war by pushing China away from its No First Use nuclear policy and its commitment to a minimal nuclear deterrent.

Joan Johnson-Freese, (Prof., Naval War College), THE BEST DEFENSE EVER?, Feb. 6, 2019. Retrieved Apr. 10, 2019 from <https://warontherocks.com/2019/02/the-best-defense-ever-busting-myths-about-the-trump-administrations-missile-defense-review/>

Even if missile defense were moderately successful and affordable, arms control advocates have convincingly warned for decades about the potential for counterproductive, even dangerous, unintended consequences of pursuing a nuclear shield. Robust missile defenses are likely to increase an adversary's incentive to strike first in a crisis, to trigger arms races to overwhelm any defensive system, or to encourage the deployment of entirely new kinds of weapons.





# REDUCE ARMS SALES TO MEXICO

- The Mexican government and its military are notoriously corrupt; U.S. arms sales to Mexico inevitably end up arming the drug cartel bosses.
- The policy of feeding major military equipment to Mexican drug cartels has turned Mexico into a killing field.

John Lindsay-Poland, (American Friends Service Committee), GUNS SOLD TO MEXICO, Apr. 26, 2018.

The exponential growth in sales to Mexico has not been accompanied by controls to track where the guns go or to ensure that they do not land in the hands of police or military units that are credibly alleged to have committed gross human rights abuses or colluded with criminal groups – the very groups that security forces are being armed to combat. Legally exported U.S. firearms have been used in massacres, disappearances, and by security forces that collude with criminal groups in Mexico on a broad scale.





# REDUCE ARMS SALES TO INDIA

- The U.S. is selling advanced U.S. military equipment to India, including the sale of armed drones, at the very time that India is purchasing the Russian S-400 anti-aircraft system.
- The sale of arms to India in such circumstances violates the terms of CAATSA (Countering America's Enemies Through Sanctions Act) – a piece of legislation imposing sanctions on Russia for its interference in U.S. elections.

DAILY NATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Oct. 5, 2018. Retrieved Apr. 16, 2019 from Nexis.

The US has urged its allies to forgo transactions with Russia, warning that the S-400 missile defense system that India intends to buy would be a "focus area" for it to implement punitive sanctions against a nation undertaking "significant" business deals with the Russians. The US administration is required under a domestic law, Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act or CAATSA to impose sanctions on any country that has "significant transactions" with Iran, North Korea or Russia.





# REDUCE ARMS SALES TO EGYPT

- The Trump administration has reversed the Obama administration decision to block arms sales to Egypt, given its record of human rights violations.
- Continuing arms sales to Egypt represents a clear violation of the terms of the U.S. Arms Export Control Act.

Medea Benjamin, (Cofounder, Code Pink), WAR PROFITEERS, Sept. 18, 2018, 1.

The Egyptian military used its American weapons to overthrow the fragile, fledgling democracy that the Egyptian people won in the Arab Spring in 2011, and then to massacre between 1,000 and 2,600 Egyptians in Cairo's Rabaa Square, the deadliest massacre of peaceful protesters anywhere since China's massacre in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

