

Security Council

The Issue of Illegal Arms Export to Sanctioned Countries

Head Chair: Dojoon (Matt) Park

Deputy Chair: Kifan (Tete) Guo



NORTHBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
CAMBODIA
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

WELCOME



Nord Anglia SEAME&I REGIONAL
Model United Nations 2024

Contents

Introduction	2
Definition of Key Terms	2
Background Information	3
Current Situation	3
Major Parties involved and their views	5
Timeline of Relevant Events	5
Related UN Treaties and Events	6
Previous Attempts to solve the issue	7
Possible Solutions	8
Suggested Reading	9
Bibliography	10

Introduction

The illegal arms export to sanctioned countries is a matter of grave concern in today's global landscape. It represents a significant challenge to international peace and security, as it undermines efforts to prevent armed conflicts, protect human rights, and maintain stability. This report will explore the complexities surrounding this issue, delving into the motivations behind illicit trade, its consequences, and the potential solutions to mitigate its impact. Despite intended shields of sanctions, a shadow network exploits vulnerabilities, feeding weapons to ostracized states. Ruthless arms merchants like Viktor Bout, see sanctioned states like North Korea and Iran as prime hunting grounds. Corrupt officials, pockets heavy with bribes, grease the wheels, smuggling advanced drones and chemical weapons across porous borders under falsified manifests. In this clandestine bazaar, even pariah outfits like ISIS find eager suppliers, replenishing arsenals with impunity despite global censure. This isn't just a violation of international law; it's a ticking time bomb threatening innocent lives caught in the crossfire of proxy wars and internal strife. The consequences of this shadow trade are far-reaching and devastating. Local conflicts escalate into prolonged wars, causing immense suffering and destabilizing entire nations. Innocent civilians bear the brunt of this trade, becoming victims of violence and displacement, while their basic human rights are violated. Moreover, the repercussions extend beyond the sanctioned countries, posing threats to regional security and fueling arms races. The global community must confront this issue with urgency, as the illegal arms export to sanctioned countries has the potential to unravel decades of diplomatic efforts and undermine the integrity of international sanctions regimes. To address this multifaceted challenge, it is crucial to develop effective strategies that encompass various dimensions. Strengthening international cooperation, enhancing intelligence sharing, and fortifying border controls are essential in disrupting supply chains and discouraging unscrupulous actors. The need for transparency and accountability from arms-producing nations cannot be overstated, as it is vital in exposing illicit sales and preventing complicity. Additionally, empowering civil society and individuals in affected regions amplifies their voices and ensures their participation in the decision-making processes that impact their lives.

In conclusion, the issue of illegal arms export to sanctioned countries demands urgent attention and concerted efforts from the international community. By understanding the motivations, consequences, and potential solutions, we can work towards a future where peace, security, and respect for human rights prevail. Through comprehensive strategies, enhanced cooperation, and a commitment to upholding international norms, we can strive to eradicate this illicit trade and foster a safer world for all.

Definition of Key Terms

Illegal arms export

The unlawful trade and transfer of weapons, including firearms, ammunition, and military equipment, in violation of national and international laws and regulations.

Sanctioned countries

Nations that have been subjected to economic or trade restrictions imposed by the international community, typically as a mean to deter aggression, address human rights violations, or prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Human rights

Fundamental rights and freedoms inherent to all individuals, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, religion, or other characteristics, include rights to life, liberty, security, and basic protections against discrimination and abuse.

Illicit trade

The illegal or unauthorized exchange of goods or services, including the smuggling, trafficking, or sale of weapons, often involves clandestine networks and criminal organizations.

Arms merchants

Individuals or entities engaged in the buying, selling, and trading of arms, often driven by financial gain and profit and involved in facilitating the flow of weapons to sanctioned countries through illicit channels.

Background Information

The clandestine flow of weapons to ostracized states is not a new phenomenon, its roots entangled in the complex threads of history. From ancient ostracism and medieval trade embargoes to modern economic sanctions, attempts to isolate troublesome states have often been met with resourceful actors navigating loopholes and fueling illicit arms markets. The concept of isolating rogue states through trade restrictions dates back centuries. Ancient Greece's practice of ostracizing individuals deemed a threat to public order laid the groundwork for later ostracism of entire states. Medieval times saw widespread use of trade embargoes, often employed by monarchs against rivals or to pressure populations during religious disputes. These early measures, though lacking the formal structures of modern sanctions, demonstrate the long-standing human effort to curtail the influence of undesirable actors through economic isolation.

The 20th century witnessed the formalization of sanctions as a tool of international relations. The League of Nations imposed its first comprehensive sanctions against Italy in 1935 in response to its invasion of Ethiopia. This paved the way for the UN's subsequent use of sanctions against states like Apartheid South Africa and Iraq during the Gulf War. While effective in certain contexts, the issue of preventing sanctioned states from acquiring weapons through illicit means emerged as a persistent challenge.

The Cold War era witnessed numerous instances of clandestine arms transfers to states under sanctions. The Soviet Union's covert supply of weapons to communist regimes in Angola and Nicaragua, despite Western sanctions, stands as a stark example. This period also saw the rise of notorious arms dealers like Viktor Bout, who exploited Cold War tensions and lax regulations to build a global network for illicit arms trafficking. These historical examples highlight the vulnerabilities inherent in sanctions frameworks and the constant cat-and-mouse game between arms control efforts and resourceful actors. The post-Cold War era has seen the proliferation of international arms control treaties and regulations. However, the issue of illegal arms exports to sanctioned states persists. Today, actors like terrorist organizations have emerged as major players in this market, alongside rogue states like North Korea, Iran, and Myanmar. Despite advancements in technology and intelligence gathering, the complex web of actors and evolving tactics continue to pose significant challenges to effective control.

Understanding the historical context of illegal arms exports to sanctioned states is crucial for formulating effective solutions in the present. Studying past successes and failures in arms control efforts, identifying persistent vulnerabilities, and analyzing the changing landscape of actors and motivations can inform more robust regulatory frameworks and international cooperation strategies. As we navigate the tangled past of this issue, we must learn from it and strive towards a future where peace and security prevail over the shadow trade in weapons.

Current situation

The illicit flow of weapons to sanctioned states continues to cast a long shadow over global security in the 21st century. Despite concerted efforts at control, rogue states, armed groups, and a web of unscrupulous actors still find ways to exploit vulnerabilities and fuel conflicts with deadly consequences. This essay delves into the current landscape of this issue, examining the key players, the evolving tactics, and the challenges hindering effective countermeasures.

Major Parties Involved

North Korea

Actively pursues nuclear capabilities and ballistic missiles, engaging with networks like the Chinese-based Global Arms Logistics and Chinese arms companies Poly Technologies and Norinco.

Viktor Bout

Notorious arms dealer with a vast network reaching sanctioned states like Iran and Myanmar. Operates through front companies and exploits porous borders in Africa and Eastern Europe.

Hezbollah

Lebanon-based terrorist group funded by Iran, acquiring advanced weaponry like anti-tank missiles and drones through covert channels. Collaborates with the Syrian government and Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Myanmar Military Junta

Engages in self-enrichment and suppression of ethnic minorities, purchasing firearms from China and Southeast Asian countries like Thailand. Utilizes corrupt military officials to facilitate purchases and circumvent sanctions.

Timeline of Relevant Events

Date	Description
1979	Iranian Revolution The overthrow of the Shah of Iran led to the establishment of an Islamic Republic under Ayatollah Khomeini. The new government was hostile to the West and began acquiring weapons from various sources, including the Soviet Union and North Korea. This marked a significant increase in illegal arms trade to a sanctioned country.

2003	<p>Iraq War</p> <p>The invasion of Iraq by the United States and its allies led to the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime. However, the post-invasion chaos also created a fertile ground for illegal arms trafficking. Large quantities of weapons were looted from Iraqi military stockpiles and sold on the black market.</p>
2011	<p>Arab Spring</p> <p>The Arab Spring uprisings that began in 2011 led to the overthrow of several authoritarian governments in the Middle East and North Africa. The conflicts that followed also saw an increase in illegal arms trafficking, as new rebel groups sought to acquire weapons to fight against government forces.</p>
2022	<p>Russia-Ukraine War</p> <p>The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine has seen a significant increase in illegal arms trafficking. Russia has been accused of supplying weapons to separatist groups in eastern Ukraine, while Ukraine has received weapons from a number of Western countries. The war has also led to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the region, which could pose a long-term security threat.</p>

Related UN Treaties and Events:

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

Adopted in 1966, the ICCPR prohibits torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and arbitrary deprivation of life. It also guarantees the right to life and liberty, freedom of expression and opinion, and freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Biological Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC)

Entered into force in 1975, the BWC prohibits the development, production, and stockpiling of biological weapons. It also requires states to destroy existing biological weapons and related facilities.

Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC)

Entered into force in 1993, the CWC prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons. It also requires states to destroy existing chemical weapons and related facilities.

United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)

Adopted in 2000, UNTOC addresses various forms of transnational organized crime, including trafficking in persons, illicit arms trafficking, and money laundering. It also promotes international cooperation in combating organized crime.

Previous Attempts to solve this issue

The issue of illegal arms export to sanctioned countries has persistently posed a formidable challenge for the international community. The covert trade of weapons to nations facing economic, political, or military restrictions not only undermines global security but also perpetuates conflicts and human rights violations. Over the years, numerous attempts have been made to tackle this issue, with varying degrees of success. This essay will explore some of the previous efforts to address the problem and evaluate their effectiveness.

One of the primary approaches adopted by the international community to prevent illegal arms export is the imposition of arms embargoes on sanctioned countries. These embargoes are typically enforced through United Nations Security Council resolutions, which prohibit the supply, sale, or transfer of weapons to the targeted nations. While these embargoes represent a significant step toward curbing arms proliferation, their effectiveness is often hindered by weak enforcement mechanisms, lack of cooperation from member states, and the exploitation of loopholes by illicit arms dealers. Furthermore, the absence of consensus among Security Council members has occasionally resulted in the selective implementation of embargoes, further undermining their impact.

Many nations have sought to fortify their domestic export control regimes to prevent illegal arms trade. These measures involve enhancing legislation, regulations, and licensing requirements to ensure greater scrutiny of arms transactions. Additionally, countries have collaborated to establish international export control regimes, such as the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and the Australia Group. These initiatives aim to harmonize export control standards and facilitate information sharing among participating states. While these efforts have contributed to raising awareness and improving the control of legal arms transfers, they have not completely eradicated the illicit trade.

Improving intelligence gathering and sharing among nations is crucial in combating illegal arms export. Intelligence agencies and law enforcement bodies have collaborated to exchange information on arms trafficking networks, routes, and individuals involved in illicit trade. Initiatives like INTERPOL's Project SALSA and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have been pivotal in coordinating efforts and fostering cooperation among member states. While these efforts have yielded some successes, the illicit arms trade remains a complex and elusive challenge, necessitating continued investment in intelligence capabilities.

Disrupting the financial networks that support illegal arms trade has emerged as a pivotal aspect of addressing this issue. International organizations, such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), have worked to develop guidelines and recommendations to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. By targeting the financial flows associated with arms trafficking, governments can undermine the profitability and sustainability of illegal trade. However, the illicit arms market often adapts to new measures, finding innovative ways to bypass financial controls.

The issue of illegal arms export to sanctioned countries remains a significant concern for the international community. While previous attempts to address the problem have achieved some degree of success, the illicit arms trade continues to thrive due to various factors such as weak enforcement mechanisms, lack of international cooperation, and the adaptability of illicit networks. To effectively tackle this issue, a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach is required, involving stronger international cooperation, enhanced intelligence sharing, stricter export controls, and targeted efforts to disrupt financial networks. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of strategies will be crucial in combating this illicit trade and safeguarding global security. By addressing the issue of illegal arms export to sanctioned countries, the international community can promote stability, peace, and the protection of human rights on a global scale.

Possible Solutions

The illicit flow of weapons to countries under international sanctions remains a persistent and multifaceted threat. Fueling regional instability, fostering human rights abuses, and undermining global security, this shadow trade demands an immediate and multifaceted response. To effectively address this issue, we must understand its root causes, analyze its consequences, and implement a proactive strategy of prevention and intervention. At the heart of illegal arms exports lies a tangled web of motivations. Rogue states seeking to circumvent sanctions find willing accomplices in corrupt officials, unscrupulous arms dealers, and militant groups eager to acquire weaponry. Greed, ideology, and a thirst for power intertwine, creating fertile ground for clandestine deals and weapons shipments.

The impact of illegal arms exports is far-reaching and deeply troubling. These weapons often end up in the hands of authoritarian regimes, fueling internal conflicts and suppressing dissent. They empower groups notorious for human rights violations, leading to increased violence and atrocities against civilians. Moreover, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons destabilizes regions, fueling regional conflicts and threatening wider international security.

Combating illegal arms exports necessitates a multi-pronged approach. Firstly, strengthening international regulations and enforcement mechanisms is critical. Enhanced cooperation and information sharing between nations, coupled with robust export controls and stricter financial oversight, can significantly impede the flow of weapons. Secondly, addressing the root causes of conflict and promoting diplomacy can offer long-term solutions, diminishing the demand for violence and ultimately reducing the allure of illegal arms. Finally, empowering civil society to play a role in monitoring and reporting instances of illicit arms trade can provide invaluable insights and foster greater public accountability. The issue of illegal arms exports transcends national boundaries. It demands a concerted global effort that acknowledges all nations' shared responsibility to maintain peace and security. By investing in collaborative solutions, prioritizing conflict prevention, and holding accountable those who violate international law, we can collectively navigate the labyrinth of this complex issue and illuminate a path towards a safer and more peaceful world.

Suggested Readings

Books:

"Chasing Ghosts: The CIA and America's Arms-Trafficking Dilemma" by Stephen Coll: This Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative report shines a light on the shadowy world of international arms deals, exposing how the CIA often turns a blind eye to illegal arms transfers in pursuit of geopolitical objectives.

"The Merchants of Death: Money, Guns, Power, and the World's Wildest Warlords" by Douglas Farah: This book takes readers on a journey through the global arms bazaar, revealing the individuals and networks that profit from fueling conflicts around the world.

"A Convenient Fiction: America, Europe, and the Myth of Weapons Restraint" by Mark Mazzetti: This book challenges the popular notion that the West effectively controls the flow of arms globally, exposing how loopholes and lax enforcement allow weapons to reach sanctioned countries and fuel conflicts.

Articles:

"The Scourge of Illegal Arms Transfers" by The New York Times: This article delves into the devastating consequences of illegal arms exports, highlighting how they exacerbate human rights abuses and prolong armed conflicts.

"How Putin Funds His War Machine: Arms Sales to Rogue Regimes" by Foreign Policy: This article explores how Russia uses arms sales to sanctioned countries like Syria and Iran to generate revenue and bolster its geopolitical influence.

"The Dirty Business of Arms Dealing: How Sanctions Fail to Stop the Flow of Weapons" by The Conversation: This article examines the limitations of sanctions in curbing illegal arms trade and proposes alternative strategies for combating this illicit activity.

Bibliography

"An Introduction to Sanctions and Trade Controls." GAN Integrity, 2022, www.ganintegrity.com/reference/sanctions-and-trade-controls/. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Arms Trade Controls in an Era of Geopolitical Tensions." @PRIOresearch, 2023, www.prio.org/events/9055. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Detecting Illegal Arms Trade on JSTOR." Jstor.org, 2024, www.jstor.org/stable/25760084. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

dlewis. "Analysing the Impact of Embargoes on Small Arms." Vision of Humanity, 3 Apr. 2023, www.visionofhumanity.org/impact-of-embargoes-on-trade-in-small-arms-light-weapons/. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Embargoed and Sanctioned Countries." Pitt.edu, 11 June 2020, www.tradecompliance.pitt.edu/embargoed-and-sanctioned-countries. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Embargoed and Sanctioned Countries." Pitt.edu, 11 June 2020, www.tradecompliance.pitt.edu/embargoed-and-sanctioned-countries. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"EU Sanctions against Russia Explained." Europa.eu, European Council, 4 Jan. 2024, www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/sanctions-against-russia-explained/. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Export Control and Sanctions." Justice.gov, 22 Feb. 2023, www.justice.gov/nsd/export-control-and-sanctions. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

katharina.kiener-manu. "Firearms Module 4 Key Issues: Authorized and Unauthorized Arms Transfers." Unodc.org, 2020, www.unodc.org/e4j/en/firearms/module-4/key-issues/authorized-and-unauthorized-arms-transfers.html. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

Niamh O'Connor. "Understanding Export Sanction Circumvention." Strongandherd.co.uk, 27 July 2023, www.strongandherd.co.uk/understanding-export-sanction-circumvention. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"OFAC Sanctioned Countries." Research and Project Administration, 2018, orpa.princeton.edu/export-controls/sanctioned-countries. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Political Implications of Illegal Arms Exports from the United States on JSTOR." Jstor.org, 2024, www.jstor.org/stable/2152442. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"Security Council Examines Risks of Illicit Weapons Exports, Hears International Instruments Are Paramount, in Debate on Arms Control - World." ReliefWeb, 11 Apr. 2023, reliefweb.int/report/world/security-council-examines-risks-illicit-weapons-exports-hears-international-instruments-are-paramount-debate-arms-control. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

"What Is a Sanctioned Country?" UArizona Research, Innovation & Impact, 27 Apr. 2021, research.arizona.edu/faq/what-sanctioned-country#:~:text=Sanctioned%20Countries%20are%20designated%20by,narcotics%20trafficking%2C%20or%20other%20reasons. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.



NISC MUN

Nord Anglia SEAME&I REGIONAL
Model United Nations 2024