



[Donate now](#)



[Google +](#)

Zeid hails entry into force of landmark global arms trade treaty

GENEVA (23 December 2014) – UN Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein on Tuesday hailed the imminent entry into force of the UN Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as a landmark step in curbing the human rights violations that stem from the poorly regulated international trade in conventional weapons.

“The ATT provides a human rights framework for States to evaluate transfers of conventional arms, ammunition and parts, and so end the flow of weaponry that may be used to commit atrocities and other serious human rights violations,” said High Commissioner Zeid.

The ATT, the first treaty regulating the international trade in conventional arms, comes into force on 24 December, having been ratified by the requisite 50th state in September*. States that have ratified the ATT must assess the impact of any arms transfer on human rights and international humanitarian law.

“The lax regulations covering the trade in conventional weapons and the consequent widespread availability and misuse of arms have had a huge human cost. The unregulated arms trade is one of the main drivers of armed conflict and violence, contributing and facilitating the commission of human rights and humanitarian law violations,” Zeid said.

“One of the fundamental purposes of the Treaty is to reduce human suffering by establishing the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the international trade in conventional arms,” he added.

The High Commissioner called on all States that have not ratified the ATT to do so and to apply the treaty's provisions to the broadest range of conventional arms.

“The ATT is a tool for States to prevent the violence and insecurity resulting from the flow of arms, and in so doing to fulfil their human rights obligations,” Zeid said.

States that are party to the ATT should not authorise any transfer if they have knowledge that the arms would contribute to genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. In addition, if there is an overriding risk that exported arms could be used to commit or facilitate a serious human rights violation or a serious violation of international humanitarian law, then such transfers should be stopped.

The work of the UN human rights system, including the OHCHR, the UN Treaty Bodies, the Human Rights Council mandate holders and the Universal Periodic Review, can provide guidance for States on assessing the impact on international human rights law and humanitarian law of any arms transfer, the High Commissioner noted.

ENDS

*The ATT was adopted on 2 April 2013 by the UN General Assembly (A/67/234B), with 154 votes in favour and 3 against. It comes into force 90 days after the 50th country ratified it (which occurred on 25 September 2014). As of 23 December, 60 States had ratified the ATT, and 130 had signed it, indicating that they intended to ratify. More details: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/ATT/>

Read the UN independent experts' statement: Arms Trade Treaty – **UN human rights experts urge all States to ratify it and consider disarmament** -

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15455&LangID=E>

For more information and **media requests**, please contact Ravina Shamdasani (+41 22 917 9169 / rshamdasani@ohchr.org) or Liz Throssell (+41 22 917 9466 / ethrossell@ohchr.org)

UN Human Rights, follow us on social media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/unitednationshumanrights>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/UNrightswire>