

DISEC



Committee: DISEC

Topic: The Question of regulating international arm transfers to Ukraine to prevent regional instability and escalation.

Chairs: Harry Gordon, Mehul Gupta

Summary:

The transfer of arms to Ukraine is a prevalent issue, having large effect on global security. Whilst the intent of the support is to help Ukraine against foreign invasion, and to minimise the effects of the war, they are also a source of concern, relating to regional instability, escalation and arms proliferation. Regulations are vital to ensure the conflict is resolved as efficiently as possible, and to avoid issues such as illicit arms trafficking and furthering of existing tensions between nations. Finding the balance between Ukraine right to self defence with international security concerns is vital in ensuring global peace.

Origins of the topic:

The issue relating to the regulation of arms transfers to Ukraine originated post Cold War. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine inherited a large arsenal but gave up its nuclear weapons in exchange for security. In 2014 Russia annexed Crimea, which led to Western military aid to Ukraine, which was further increased after the full-scale invasion in 2022. After this NATO began to supply weaponry to its ally, however this has raised concerns over the effects of such a decision, with tensions between NATO and Russia being further worsened.

Relevance of the topic:

The regulation of arms transfers to Ukraine is crucial, given the implications they have for breaching global security, and impacts such as escalation of conflict and arms proliferation. Whilst lack of restrictions strengthens Ukraine's defences, it also risks prolonging the war and worsening tensions between nations and Russia. There are also concerns that the weaponry provided could become part of the illicit arms trade, or be misused post conflict, creating issues in the future regarding international stability.

Who the topic affects:

- Ukraine – Being the recipients of the arms, and being reliant on the trades, they are the most affected country by the decisions made.
- Russia – Being the nation at war with Ukraine, they see all arms trades as escalation and therefore increases tensions between other nations and Russia. They also see military action as an appropriate response.
- NATO – They are key suppliers of arms transfer to Ukraine, which is leading to diplomatic challenges.
- Black market and terrorist groups – They are at high risk of receiving weaponry if the arms are not properly regulated, tracked and secured by Ukraine

Previous Attempts to Fix the Problem:

Arms Trade Treaty- the ATT which was adopted in 2013 sets common standards internationally for the regulation of trade and conventional arms ammunition parts and components its humanitarian aim is to reduce the human suffering and promote responsible action and transparency within the whole of the international Arms trade. The treaty requires that arms transfers must be assessed to ensure that they are not contributing to violations of international law and or human rights. however, this is not necessarily being followed when it comes to the selling of arms to Ukraine.

EU Arms Export Control System- The whole EU has common positions on arms exports in which the member states are expected to adhere to these outlines aim to ensure that arms exports do not contribute to regional instability in response to the Ukraine conflict EU member states have now adjusted their policies moving from a more cautious stance to now providing both light and heavy weapons to Ukraine the shift has raised more questions about the need to revise EU arms export control system to better address the often evolving situation.

Key Definitions:

NATO- The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a security alliance formed of 30 countries from North America and Europe.

EU- the European Union (EU) is a unique partnership between 27 European countries, known as Member States, or EU countries. Together they cover much of the European continent. The EU is home to around 447 million people, which is around 6 % of the world's population.

Relevant Countries:

Russia

United States

Ukraine

EU countries