



Fact Sheet  
Bureau of Nonproliferation  
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## **Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies**

The [Wassenaar Arrangement](#) (WA) is the first multilateral institution covering both conventional weapons and sensitive dual-use goods and technologies. The WA received final approval by 33 co-founding countries in July 1996, and began operations in September 1996.

The WA is designed to prevent destabilizing accumulations of arms and dual-use goods and technologies. The Arrangement encourages transparency, consultation and, where appropriate, national policies of export restraint on those items found on the lists. In doing so, the WA fosters greater responsibility and accountability in transfers of arms and dual-use goods and technologies. The Arrangement also provides a venue in which governments can consider collectively the implications of various transfers on their international and regional security interests. This is the principal security benefit of membership.

WA members maintain export controls on the WA Munitions and Dual-Use lists. These lists regularly are reviewed by experts of the Participating States and revised as needed. However, the decision to transfer or deny any controlled item remains the responsibility of individual member states. To facilitate meeting the WA's principal objective of preventing destabilizing accumulations of conventional arms, members report on their decisions to transfer or deny to non-members certain classes of weapons and dual-use equipment and technologies important in producing those weapons.

In order to enhance transparency in arms transfers, Wassenaar members report semiannually on deliveries to nonmembers of weapons in categories derived from the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

In order to promote transparency and like-mindedness, Wassenaar members also report on their transfers to nonmembers of dual-use goods. The Wassenaar Dual-Use List comprises a Basic List of controlled technology, on which members semiannually report aggregated license denials. The Basic List is subdivided into a Sensitive List of technologies on which members report individual denials of licenses within 30-60 days. In addition to these individual denials, members also report semiannually aggregated numbers of licenses issued or transfers made. Finally, the Sensitive List is further subdivided into a Very Sensitive List, consisting of technology subject to extreme vigilance in national licensing decisions.

Although no country is an explicit target of the WA, members are committed to dealing firmly with states whose behavior is a cause for serious concern. Wassenaar members deal with these states and regions of instability by preventing, through shared national policies of restraint, the acquisition of armaments and sensitive dual-use goods and technologies for military end-use.

Wassenaar also provides a forum for discussing security and conventional weapons nonproliferation issues that do not fall within one of the other, more established nonproliferation regimes. Among other topics, Wassenaar has addressed Sudan, North Korea's weapons production programs, Iran's conventional arms procurement objectives, arms flows to areas of conflict in Africa, and the situation in Kosovo. At the December 1996 Plenary meeting, members issued a public statement confirming that they do not transfer arms or ammunition to Afghanistan. In 1997, they indicated that they would exercise maximum restraint regarding arms transfers to Central Africa. At the 1999 Plenary meeting, members agreed to increase their reporting of conventional weapons.

At the December 2000 Plenary, the Participating States agreed to adopt U.S.-proposed export control guidelines, including strict end-user safeguards to prevent unauthorized access, and the use of national means to control the export of man-portable air defense systems ("MANPADS"). This marked the first time

the WA agreed to harmonized export controls on any class of weapons. The 2000 Plenary also adopted "best practices" papers in the following areas: Disposal of Surplus/Demilitarized Military Equipment, Extreme Vigilance for Items on the WA Very Sensitive List, and Effective Export Control Enforcement.

At the December 2001 Plenary, in response to the attacks of September 11 and related global events, the WA added to the "Purposes" of the Initial Elements (the Arrangements organizing document) the statement that "Participating States will continue to prevent the acquisition of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies by terrorist groups and organizations, as well as by individual terrorists. Such efforts are an integral part of the global fight against terrorism." Participating States added two sub-categories of military items: armored bridge-launching vehicles and gun-carriers specifically designed for towing artillery.

At the December 2002 Plenary, WA Participating States agreed to intensified information sharing to combat terrorism. Best practice guidelines for exports of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SA/LW) were adopted.

The December 2003 Plenary, chaired by the United States, emphasized the accomplishments of an "Assessment" of the functioning of the WA, and adopted a number of important new initiatives. Recognizing the continuing threat posed to civil aviation by unauthorized proliferation of MANPADS, Participating States adopted a stronger and more comprehensive agreement with provision for more long-term measures to tighten security over these weapons. These measures are aimed in particular at preventing acquisition by and diversion of these weapons to terrorists. A new mandatory reporting category for SA/LW was added. Participating States also agreed to impose strict control on the brokering of conventional arms. In addition, a Statement of Understanding on Control of Non-Listed Dual-Use Items was adopted. Participating States agreed to support, by all appropriate means, the efforts of the UNSC to prevent illegal arms transfers to terrorist groups and to all governments and groups under the UNSC arms embargoes. Finally, steps were taken to broaden outreach to relevant international institutions (e.g. other export control regimes) and some non-Wassenaar member states to explain the goals of the Arrangement and to encourage them to apply similar measures.

WA meetings are held in Vienna, where the Arrangement has established a small secretariat. Plenary meetings are held at least once a year. The Plenary has established a General Working Group, an Expert Group, and a Licensing and Enforcement Officers subgroup, which meet periodically.

### **The 33 Wassenaar Arrangement members are:**

Argentina	Netherlands
Australia	New Zealand
Austria	Norway
Belgium	Poland
Bulgaria	Portugal
Canada	Republic of Korea
Czech Republic	Romania
Denmark	Russia
Finland	Slovakia
France	Spain
Germany	Sweden
Greece	Switzerland
Hungary	Turkey
Ireland	Ukraine
Italy	United Kingdom
Japan	United States
Luxembourg	

### **Wassenaar Arrangement Reporting Requirements**

#### **Arms**

Semiannual reporting on deliveries to non-members of conventional weapons in the following categories:

- Battle Tanks
- Armored Combat Vehicles
- Large Calibre Artillery Systems
- Military Aircraft/Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
- Military and Attack Helicopters
- Warships

- Missiles or Missile Systems
- Small Arms Light Weapons, including MANPADS

**Dual-Use Goods and Technology**

**Tier One:** Basic List of Dual-Use Goods and Technologies

- Notification of Aggregated License Denials, Semiannually

**Tier Two:** Sensitive List

- Notification of Individual License Denials, Within 30-60 Days
- Also Semiannual Notification of Aggregated Licenses Issued or Transfers Made

**Subset of Tier Two:** Very Sensitive List

- Transfer Decisions Subject To Extreme Vigilance by
- Exporting Government Reporting Requirements Same as Tier Two

Please see the Wassenaar Arrangement website for more information and texts of public documents, [www.wassenaar.org](http://www.wassenaar.org).

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