



Good morning. My name is Thomas Woodley and I am president of Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME). First, I wish to thank the committee for the opportunity to testify this morning. It is a privilege to join you this morning, and I look forward to a frank and honest discussion about Canada, and its role in the sad realities of the international arms trade today.

CJPME is an organization whose mission is to empower Canadians of all backgrounds to promote justice, development and peace in the Middle East. Because of the devastating role that arms have played in the Middle East over the years, my organization has become increasingly involved in attempts to limit the flow of arms to this part of the world.

Stats?

CJPME was thrilled when the International Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was first considered during discussions in 2012, then adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2013, and entered into force in 2014. However, despite our excitement at the adoption of the ATT by much of the world community, we were saddened and upset by the Canadian government's reluctance to consider signing the treaty for much of the past several years.

When the Canadian government changed in 2015, we were encouraged that there had been a campaign pledge to join the treaty, the promise stating, "We will ensure that Canada becomes a party to the international Arms Trade Treaty."¹

We had high hopes that the new government would sign on to the treaty in a way which addressed the longstanding shortcomings of Canada's existing arms export controls. Nevertheless, when Bill C-47 was introduced, it was immediately clear that many of the fundamental objectives of the ATT were being circumvented through the provisions of the Bill, whether through omission, or whether through deferral to regulations; whether intentionally, or unintentionally.

Ploughshares. Thank you very much for the kind invitation to address this Committee..

A. Canada must accede to the ATT to align with our international allies.

1. Canada should sign and ratify the ATT because it part of a minority at the UN which hasn't yet signed. 130 of the 193 UN member states have already signed the ATT; Canada is the last of its NATO and G7 allies to be taking this step. Thus, Canada is one of the few that has not already done so. The ATT is the international community's response to non-existent or lax controls on the international arms trade.²
2. Canada should sign the ATT because it is a campaign pledge of the current government: "We will ensure that Canada becomes a party to the international Arms Trade Treaty."³

B. Canada must strengthen Bill C-47 to ensure that it encompasses arms sales to the US. Otherwise, Canada's accession to the ATT becomes largely meaningless.

1. Excluding arms sales to the US would render our accession to the ATT meaningless. The US is the number one arms exporter in the world. The US is Canada's largest customer for arms. Under the Canada-US Defence Production Sharing Program (DPSA), arms sales between the two countries remain secret. The point of the ATT is to be able to track inappropriate arms sales, yet

unless C-47 supersedes the DPSA, the *majority* of Canada's arms exports will remain undisclosed.

2. Canada should work with the US to jointly submit the DPSA to ATT commitments. The US has signed the ATT; Canada does not have to take the step on DPSA alone. Canada and all its allies should work in parallel to see all arms sales captured as intended by the ATT.

C. Whether or not Canada accedes to the ATT, the government must show greater resolve in adhering to the spirit of its arms controls laws.

1. Canada's existing arms sales control laws are good, but Canada often violated them. There's no point in having laws if we're not going to respect them. Canada's contract with Saudi Arabia for light armoured vehicles (LAVs) clearly violated our export control laws, but both the Harper and Trudeau government's disregarded Canadian law.
2. Parliament should establish a House Subcommittee on Arms Trade. The government must submit to greater oversight whether it passes C-47 or not. Establishing greater transparency on Canada's arms trade will only help, regardless of how individual politicians may feel about the the economic benefits vs. the ethical considerations of the arms trade.

D. In the ATT framework, in parallel with its allies, Canada should reduce its dependence on the arms trade. Dealing in arms is like dealing in drugs – you are profiting from other peoples' misery.

1. Canada should uphold and promote the tenets and benefits of the ATT – reduction in arms sales. Canada is not a leading arms exporter, and should not wish to become one. Canada should pressure its allies – many of whom are major arms suppliers – to adhere to the terms of the ATT. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Canada ranks as 15 in world arms sales. SIPRI ranks Canadian allies France, Germany, the UK, the US, and Israel among the top seven arms exporters. France, Germany and the UK have all signed and ratified the treaty.

The ATT imposes a number of mechanisms which would be prudent for Canada and its potential arms trade partners. E.g.

- i. Establish an arms export control list and provide annual reports to the UN. Establish and maintain a national control system for the export of the conventional arms covered by the ATT, and submit a report annually to the UN.
- ii. Prohibit the transfer of arms when such arms might be used for inhumane or illegal purposes. This would prevent the illegal trafficking of arms, or arms sales when there is reasonable suspicion that the would be used in the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, or other war crimes.

E. Note: The ATT is nothing like the defunct Canadian Long-Gun Registry. The ATT's targets, mechanisms and reporting are nothing like the Long-Gun Registry.

1. The ATT imposes reporting requirements on importers and exporters, not end users. End users of imported guns will not be stuck with any additional reporting requirements.
2. Non-compliance will impact countries and importers/exporters, not end users. The Long-gun Registry had strict penalties for end user compliance failures. Under the ATT, there is no notion of compliance for end users of imported guns. Compliance issues under the ATT only apply to countries and rogue importers and exporters.

¹ "Guns: We will take action to get handguns and assault weapons off our streets," RealChange.ca on Liberal.ca Website, Liberal Party of Canada Website, <https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/guns/> accessed April 13, 2016

² As the UN states, "Those suffering most are civilian populations trapped in situations of armed violence in settings of both crime and conflict, often in conditions of poverty, deprivation and extreme inequality, where they are all too frequently on the receiving end of the misuse of arms by State armed and security forces, non-State armed groups and organized criminal groups."

³ "Guns: We will take action to get handguns and assault weapons off our streets," RealChange.ca on Liberal.ca Website, Liberal Party of Canada Website, <https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/guns/> accessed April 13, 2016