

Canadian policy

Canada was one of the main supporters of the 1968 resolution to establish a register, and has consistently supported the idea of conventional arms limitations, especially on a regional basis.

Canada's current controls rest on four main restrictions.⁹ Arms will not be shipped to:

1. countries which pose a threat to Canada or its allies;
2. countries under the threat of hostilities or currently engaged in hostilities;
3. countries under UN Security Council sanctions;
4. countries whose governments have a persistent record of serious human rights violations unless it can be demonstrated that the goods exported will not be used against the civilian population.

Canada does not provide an annual list of major military exports or of export permits granted by the government. Statistics are available on the net value of Canadian "defence exports" broken down by industry sector (aerospace, armament, electrical, general purchasing, ship-building and vehicles) to the United States, Europe and "other" countries. These are provided on an annual basis. Canada also does not publish the names of the countries to which it prohibits the export of military equipment, on the grounds that

It is not our intention to publish a list of countries which are affected by this policy. . . . It is not desirable that the presence or absence of any country on a list such as this be a matter of public controversy.¹⁰

Arguments in Favour of a Register

Openness as a deterrent

It is possible that increased publicity or openness will discourage states from transferring arms, especially to certain countries. Domestic reactions can be relatively effective in limiting arms exports to specific countries. By in effect publicizing the practices of different states, the degree of governmental accountability to domestic and international opinion is increased.

⁹ DEA, *Export Control Policy*, Communiqué no. 155, 10 September 1986.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, "Background Paper," p. 4.