

Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade (COAT)

Contact: Richard Sanders, COAT Coordinator

Address: 541 McLeod Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 5R2

Email: ad207@freenet.carleton.ca

Website: www.ncf.carleton.ca/coat/

Telephone: (613) 231-3076 / Fax: (613) 231-2614

Organization's mandate/goals:

COAT is a national network of individuals and organizations in Canada that began in late 1988 to organize opposition to ARMX '98, which was the country's largest weapons bazaar. COAT has continued to expose and oppose Canada's role in the international arms trade, particularly where there is trade to governments which are engaged in war or which violate human rights.

COAT gathers information and conducts research on various international efforts by NGOs, governments and businesses to promote the economic conversion of military industries, bases and other facilities to civilian alternatives. Attention is focused on promoting conversion programs which are socially useful and environmentally sound. Based in Ottawa, COAT has made great headway in exposing and opposing many military export events held in the nation's capital. COAT's contribution to the meaningful understanding, discussion and pressure for conversion, has come primarily through their magazine, Press for Conversion!

Areas of expertise relevant to 2001 UN Conference on Small Arms:

Collecting and Destroying Excess Weapons and Ammunition --*Voluntary surrender/amnesty*

COAT has been involved in the Nuclear Weapons Conversion project, which has involved researching Canadian nuclear weapons-related contracts and encouraging conversion.

Human and Social Development -- *Develop public education programs to enhance efforts to counter SALW proliferation and the development of "gun cultures"*

Opposing Military Trade Events is of particular importance to the coalition. It has provided research, writing, and organizing opposition to military export events in Ottawa. It is active in a project aimed at peace links: soliciting letters from NGOs in countries where Canada exports military equipment and distributing them in Canada. During Ottawa's War Show, the COAT used the war show to raise awareness on peace, human rights, environmental and economic issues.

Consultation, Co-operation and Information Exchange -- *Coalition Building*

The Coalition publishes Press for Conversion!, Canada's only magazine which focuses on the conversion of military industries and bases around the world. COAT has organized two conferences on human rights and conversion, having also raised awareness of weapons trade-related issues at these events.

Working with Vulnerable Groups --*Advocacy*

The Non-Violent Play project spear headed by the coalition is aimed at organizing opposition to war toys and violent games, and promoting cooperative children's activities.