

U.S. Conventional Arms Transfer Policy

The President has issued a National Security Presidential Memorandum (NSPM) approving a new and updated U.S. Conventional Arms Transfer (CAT) Policy to support Allies and partners, expand opportunities for American industry and create American jobs, and maintain U.S. national security while thoroughly reviewing arms transfers to ensure that they are in the U.S. interest.

This policy provides a framework under which U.S. Government agencies review and evaluate proposed arms transfers. This new policy reflects the priorities of the President's National Security Strategy to 1) preserve peace through strength by reforming regulations to facilitate exports of U.S. military equipment; 2) strengthen partners and allies, 3) facilitate U.S. economic security and innovation; while 4) upholding respect for human rights and U.S. nonproliferation objectives.

The updated CAT Policy also increases focus on the appropriate use of U.S. arms and military training, and directs that the United States offer support to allies and partners to reduce the chances national and coalition operations, or activities of civilian security forces and police, will cause civilian harm.

Specifically, we will increase opportunities for pre-deployment training and simulations of complex operational environments to help partners avoid civilian casualties. We will also encourage acquisitions of U.S. technology and training to enable more accurate battlespace awareness and more accurate targeting. We will also continue training to assist security forces in carrying out operations in a manner that respects human rights.

This NSPM is the first step in a series of very practical, results-focused initiatives to transform the way the United States Government works to support and grow our defense industrial base. It directs a government-wide initiative to better align our conventional arms transfers with our national security and economic interests. It requires the United State Government to develop, and ultimately implement, a work plan to improve transfers in the most beneficial manner to national security and foreign policy interests, to include maintaining our technological edge, providing capabilities to meet shared objectives, and preventing the proliferation that may be destabilizing and dangerous to international peace and security.

In the coming weeks, we will be engaging with stakeholders to gain their perspectives on this initiative. We encourage submission of comments via email to ArmsTransferProcess@state.gov.

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