	Press Release	Further information: Stephanie Blenckner Communications Officer Phone: +46 8 655 97 47 E-mail: blenckner@sipri.org
---	---------------	--

Same air cargo companies deliver both humanitarian aid and weapons, says SIPRI

(Stockholm, 12 May 2009) Air cargo companies involved in illicit or destabilizing arms transfers to African conflict zones have also been repeatedly contracted to deliver humanitarian aid and support peacekeeping operations, according to a report released today by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The report reveals that 90 per cent of the air cargo companies identified in arms trafficking-related reports have also been used by major UN agencies, EU and NATO member states, defence contractors and some of the world's leading NGOs to transport humanitarian aid, peacekeepers and peacekeeping equipment. In some cases, air cargo companies are delivering both aid and weapons to the same conflict zones.


Entitled 'Air Transport and Destabilizing Commodity Flows', the report shows how air cargo carriers involved in humanitarian aid and peacekeeping operations have also transported a range of other conflict-sensitive goods such as cocaine, diamonds, coltan and other precious minerals.

The report also outlines some EU-centred solutions which can change the behaviour of some companies and put others out of business. According to Hugh Griffiths, one of the report's co-authors, 'The problems have been recognized by the EU, now it is a question of selecting from the available options and coming together as a community with coordinated measures.'

The report presents a range of inexpensive options which could be adopted to tackle the problems:

- UN agencies, governments, defence contractors and NGOs could make humanitarian aid and peacekeeping contracts conditional by requiring air cargo carriers to adhere to an ethical transportation code of conduct.
- The EU could utilize its existing air safety regulations to put companies involved in arms trafficking or destabilizing commodity flows out of business.
- The EU could provide specialized training for its civilian and military peacekeepers to better identify suspect air cargo carriers operating in Africa and Eastern Europe.

'A coordinated response by the EU and the humanitarian aid community could require companies to choose between transporting arms or aid to conflict zones while air safety enforcement could put hard core arms dealers out of business,' said Mark Bromley, co-author of the report. 'Our research shows that companies named in arms trafficking-related reports have poor safety records. Safety regulations represent their Achilles heel, and can do to them what tax evasion charges did to Al Capone.'

	Press Release	Further information: Stephanie Blenckner Communications Officer Phone: +46 8 655 97 47 E-mail: blenckner@sipri.org
---	---------------	--

Further details

A pre-publication of 'Air Transport and Destabilizing Commodity Flows' can be downloaded from www.sipri.org from 12 May.

Contact

Hugh Griffiths +46 (0)73 339 7474, +46 (0)8 655 9781 or email: griffiths@sipri.org
Mark Bromley +46 (0)70 845 6032, +46 (0)8 655 9735 or email: bromley@sipri.org.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute - www.sipri.org

Established in 1966, SIPRI is an independent research institute focusing on international security, arms control, and disarmament. SIPRI has built its reputation on authoritative, balanced research, including its flagship publication, the SIPRI Yearbook. SIPRI was recently named as one of the world's leading think tanks in the 'Think Tank Index' issued by the journal Foreign Policy.