

	<p>Press Release</p> <p>April 27th, 2009</p>	<p>Further information: Stephanie Blenckner Communications Officer Phone: +46 8 655 97 47 E-mail: blenckner@sipri.org</p>
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Significant rise in arms deliveries to the Middle East, says SIPRI

(Stockholm, 27 April 2009) New data released today by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reveal a significant rise in arms transfers to the Middle East. There were also increases in arms deliveries to East Asia, the Caucasus and Pakistan. The USA remains the world's largest exporter, followed by Russia and Germany. The completely updated data set, which is based on unbiased information gathered by the SIPRI Arms Transfers Programme, is accessible from today at www.sipri.org.

SIPRI Researcher Pieter Wezeman comments on the 38% rise in transfers to the Middle East: 'During the past five years, we have seen the re-emergence of the Middle East as a major recipient of conventional weapons systems. While we are a long way from the levels reached in the early to mid-1980s, this is still a worrying trend in a region beset by multiple sources of potential conflict and limited intergovernmental trust and transparency.'

Impact of the global financial crisis and falling oil prices

While the global financial crisis and falling oil prices are clearly going to have a significant impact on the global arms trade in the years ahead, it is too soon to demonstrate the impact of the crisis. However, there are early signs of countries delaying or cancelling purchases.

According to Dr Paul Holtom, Head of the SIPRI Arms Transfer Programme: 'While certain states—including Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Morocco—may look to tighten their belts, others—such as Taiwan and the UAE—are boosting their military capabilities. At a time when the world needs cooperative solutions to global problems, the thriving international arms market points to a squandering of resources which the international community can ill afford.'

Other notable developments

- The average volume of **worldwide** arms transfers for 2004–2008 was 21 per cent higher than the period 1999–2003, when the level was the lowest since the 1960s.
- **Russian** arms exports were 14% higher in 2004–2008 than in 1999–2003, although its overall share of the global market remained roughly the same. This increase was largely due to rapid increases in deliveries to Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- The **United States** remains the world's largest exporter of military equipment, accounting for 31% of global arms exports for the period 2004–2008. During this period, 37% of US deliveries went to the Middle East.
- Transfers of major conventional weapons systems to **China** fell dramatically in 2007 and 2008, as China shifts its focus to domestic procurement. China placed no new 'big ticket' orders for combat aircraft and naval vessels with Russia in 2007 and 2008.

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- The volume of deliveries to **Taiwan** has also dropped significantly, falling 44% between 1999–2003 and 2004–2008. However, Taiwan signed a major arms deal with the United States in late 2008.
- There were increasing volumes of transfers in the period 2004–2008 to states involved in armed conflict in 2008, such as **Afghanistan, Georgia, Israel, Pakistan, Sri Lanka**.

The SIPRI Arms Transfer Programme experts

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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.