

## Arms Trade Treaty Set to Enter Into Force

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The Arms Trade Treaty cleared its last hurdle to becoming international law when seven nations announced ratification on Sept. 25 in a ceremony at the United Nations. The pact to regulate the global market in conventional arms, now joined by 53 countries, is set to enter into force on Dec. 24.

Under the terms of the treaty, it enters force 90 days after the 50th state deposits its ratification document.

In a statement read by Angela Kane, UN high representative for disarmament affairs, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon commended Argentina, the Bahamas, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Portugal, St. Lucia, Senegal, and Uruguay for ratifying the treaty, which he called “a robust, legally binding commitment to provide a measure of hope to millions of people around the world.”

The European Union welcomed the prospect of the pact’s entry into force. “When effectively and widely implemented, the Arms Trade Treaty will make trade in conventional arms more responsible and transparent, thus reducing human suffering and tangibly contributing to international peace, security and stability,” the EU said in a statement.

The 17-page treaty requires all participating states “to effectively regulate the international trade in conventional arms, and to prevent their diversion” and to establish and implement “national control systems.” The treaty covers eight categories of weapons ranging from battle tanks and combat aircraft to small arms and light weapons, as well as ammunition and components.

The treaty was adopted by the UN General Assembly on April 2, 2013, by a vote of 154-3 with 23 abstentions. It was opened for signature on June 3, 2013.

The United States signed the treaty in September 2013, but the Obama administration has yet to submit the measure to the Senate for approval.

Under the terms of the treaty, a conference of the states-parties “shall be convened...no later than one year” after the treaty’s entry into force.

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