

U.S. Leads Upward Trend in Arms Exports, Asian and Gulf States Arms Imports Up: Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI)

By [Global Research News](#)

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(Stockholm, 16 March 2015) The United States has taken a firm lead as the major arms exporter globally, according to new data on international arms transfers published today by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Overall, the volume of international transfers of major conventional weapons grew by 16 per cent between 2005–2009 and 2010–14.

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The volume of US exports of major weapons rose by 23 per cent between 2005–2009 and 2010–14. The USA's share of the volume of international arms exports was 31 per cent in 2010–14, compared with 27 per cent for Russia. Russian exports of major weapons increased by 37 per cent between 2005–2009 and 2010–14. During the same period, Chinese exports of major arms increased by 143 per cent, making it the third largest supplier in 2010–14, however still significantly behind the USA and Russia.

'The USA has long seen arms exports as a major foreign policy and security tool, but in recent years exports are increasingly needed to help the US arms industry maintain production levels at a time of decreasing US military expenditure', said Dr Aude Fleurant, Director of the SIPRI Arms and Military Expenditure Programme.

Imports by Gulf Cooperation Council states on the rise

Arms imports to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states increased by 71 per cent from 2005–2009 to 2010–14, accounting for 54 per cent of imports to the Middle East in the latter period. Saudi Arabia rose to become the second largest importer of major weapons worldwide in 2010–14, increasing the volume of its arms imports four times compared to 2005–2009.

'Mainly with arms from the USA and Europe, the GCC states have rapidly expanded and modernized their militaries', said Pieter Wezeman, Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Arms and Military Expenditure Programme. 'The GCC states, along with Egypt, Iraq, Israel and Turkey in the wider Middle East, are scheduled to receive further large orders of major arms in the coming years.'

Asian arms imports continue to increase

Of the top 10 largest importers of major weapons during the 5-year period 2010-14, 5 are in Asia: India (15 per cent of global arms imports), China (5 per cent), Pakistan (4 per cent), South Korea (3 per cent) and Singapore (3 per cent).

These five countries accounted for 30 per cent of the total volume of arms imports worldwide. India accounted for 34 per cent of the volume of arms imports to Asia, more than three times as much as China. China's arms imports actually decreased by 42 per cent between 2005-2009 and 2010-14.

'Enabled by continued economic growth and driven by high threat perceptions, Asian countries continue to expand their military capabilities with an emphasis on maritime assets', said Siemon Wezeman, Senior Researcher with the SIPRI Arms and Military Expenditure Programme. 'Asian countries generally still depend on imports of major weapons, which have strongly increased and will remain high in the near future.'

Other notable developments

- **European** arms imports decreased by 36 per cent between 2005-2009 to 2010-14. Developments in Ukraine and Russia may counter this trend after 2014 with several states bordering Russia increasing their arms imports.
- **Germany's** arms exports decreased by 43 per cent between 2005-2009 and 2010-14. However, it received several large arms orders in 2014 from Middle Eastern states.
- Arms imports by **Azerbaijan** increased by 249 per cent between 2005-2009 and 2010-14.
- **African** arms imports increased by 45 per cent between 2005-2009 to 2010-14.
- Between 2005-2009 and 2010-14 **Algeria** was the largest arms importer in Africa, followed by **Morocco**, whose arms imports increased elevenfold.
- **Cameroon** and **Nigeria** received arms from several states in order to fulfil their urgent demand for weapons to fight Boko Haram.
- To fight ISIS, **Iraq** received arms from countries as diverse as Iran, Russia and the USA in 2014.
- Deliveries and orders for ballistic missile defence systems increased significantly in 2010-14, notably in the GCC and North East Asia.

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