

Arms Trade Treaty Presentation

Age range: 10-16

Time: 20 minutes

Outline

The presentation gives an overview of Oxfam's campaign for a Global Arms Trade treaty. It can be used as a stimulus for further learning and active citizenship activities on this issue.

Learning Objectives

- Learn about the arms trade and why it is a problem
- Learn about the Arms Trade Treaty and why it is needed
- Think about actions that you can take to help make the ATT a reality

Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation

Curricular links

Geography
Citizenship
History

Keywords

Arms trade, Conflict, United Nations

Presentation Script

Slide 1

Chew this over.

Armed violence kills over 2,000 people every day and keeps millions more living in fear or poverty.

This violence is fuelled by the unregulated global trade in arms and ammunition that enables weapons to fall into the hands of dictators, genocidal regimes, militias and mafias.

2012 brings an opportunity to better regulate this deadly trade. In July and October 2012 United Nations' member states will negotiate an international Arms Trade Treaty.

Slide 2

These are the 3 questions you will think about during this presentation:

1. What is the arms trade, and why is it a problem?
2. What is the ATT?
3. Why do we need to make some noise about it?

Slide 3

What is the arms trade, and why is it a problem?

Check that pupils understand what the trade in arms means.

Slide 4

[Exploding myths image]

Slide 5

The Arms Trade is the sale of weapons, many of them 'small arms' from companies in countries *making* the weapons (including the US and the UK) to countries where there is *conflict* (for example recently in Sierra Leone). The scale of this trade globally is huge.

Check pupils understand *scale* of this trade relating to the last slide.

Slide 6

So, why do we need to worry about this? What impact does armed violence have? [Opportunity for discussion]

Slide 7

[Bombshell image]

This shocking statistic gives a sense of the scale of the impact of armed violence.

Slide 8

[Paying the price image]

In World War II most of those killed were soldiers. 90% of people killed in armed conflict are now civilians.

Check pupils understand that most of these are using 'small arms'.

Small arms are weapons designed for personal use; including revolvers and self-loading pistols; rifles and carbines; sub-machine guns; assault rifles; and light machine guns.

Slide 9

[No kidding image - child soldiers statistic]

People not only lose their lives to armed violence, but are also affected in numerous other ways including being forced to participate. It also limits people's ability to earn a living, grow crops, and benefit from education.

Slide 10

Currently there are no comprehensive, legally binding international rules governing the arms trade, and gaps and loopholes in national controls mean weapons are ending up in conflict zones and in the hands of human rights abusers.

The trade in bananas is subject to more stringent and enforced rules than the arms trade.

Slide 11

[Think twice image]

Give time for this statistic sink in.

Slide 12

What is the Arms Trade Treaty?

A treaty means an agreement between countries about how they are going to behave.

Campaigners are asking the UN for there to be a treaty which properly controls the arms trade globally.

Slide 13

A “bulletproof” Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), that would be would be an international legally-binding agreement that would stop transfers of arms and ammunitions that fuel human suffering, conflict, poverty and serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Slide 14

The Control Arms campaign is calling for a treaty covering all conventional weapons. This includes everything from pistols to tanks and all ammunition. Countries would be required to incorporate controls into their national laws, and report all arms transfers to an international registry.

And to make the treaty really effective, countries would need to agree a monitoring and enforcement regime, so that breaches of the treaty are fully investigated and penalised.

Slide 15

[Sobering thought image]

Slide 16

Most states have inconsistently implemented existing controls on the arms trade, or have failed to incorporate them into national law.

Several arms-exporting countries have not signed up to these agreements at all.

But an Arms Trade Treaty would be **international**, ensuring all countries are working to the same standards. It would also be **legally binding**, and in line with international law.

Slide 17

The international community can tackle the spread of arms by ‘stopping the flow and draining the pool’ – meaning we put in place stronger controls on the movement of arms, and take them out of communities already awash with weapons. Programmes of weapons collection and destruction have developed significantly in the last ten years. For instance in South Africa, schools, hospitals, public buildings and even towns have been designated as ‘Gun Free Zones’ – reducing fear and armed violence.

Slide 18

Arms have a legitimate use in our society. States have the right to use them to protect the life, liberty, and physical integrity of their citizens against attack – or imminent attack during internal law-enforcement operations. Arms can also play a specific role in international peace-keeping operations.

Slide 19

153 states – three-quarters of world governments – voted in favour of starting work on an ATT at the UN General Assembly in December 2006. This included the UK and France – both of whom are among the biggest arms exporters. Other major exporters (China, Russia) abstained from the vote, suggesting that though skeptical, they are not completely opposed. Only the US voted against, leaving them isolated on this issue.

Slide 20

[Time to act image]

Slide 21

Why do we need to make some noise about the ATT now?

Slide 22

The United Nations came very close to agreeing an Arms Trade Treaty at the UN conference in July 2012.

However the USA blocked progress on the treaty at the conference, declaring that they needed more time to consider it.

Although it's disappointing that the treaty was blocked on the last day of the conference, getting to this stage was a huge success, and there is now another chance to secure an Arms Trade Treaty at the UN General Assembly meeting in October 2012.

Slide 23

Negotiations to consider the idea of an ATT at UN level began in December 2006.

After 6 years they are now going to decide whether and how to implement one. We don't have any more time to waste – world leaders need to hear that now is the time for agreement!

To tackle the devastating impacts of armed violence we need a global Arms Trade Treaty. Some states are opposed to stricter controls and will try to use this process to weaken the final agreement. We must keep the pressure up to make sure they don't succeed.

Slide 24

For the treaty to become a reality we need to pressure and support the UK government to ensure they take the lead in negotiating a treaty that doesn't compromise on human rights or poverty. You can help create this pressure by sharing your thoughts on the Arms Trade Treaty with your friends, family and local decision makers (including your local MP).

Politicians are central to this process, and they listen to the public. If enough people tell them they care, they will notice.

Slide 25

End slide.