

China Buying More Weapons From Russia; Arms Exports Fall



Pakistan, Bangladesh, Algeria, and Myanmar were the largest buyers of China weapons. (Photo: REUTERS/Stringer)

China, the world's second-largest arms producer, saw its worldwide exports of weapons drop between 2016 and 2020 - but it imported more weapons from Russia in the same period.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute says arms exports by China over these five years dropped by 7.8% compared with the period from 2011 to 2015. The decline saw China arms exports account for 5.2% of all international arms exports between 2016 and 2020.

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China was the largest arms importer in East Asia, according to the institute. China accounted for 4.7% of international arms imports in the period.

In 2018 China paid \$1.57 billion for weapons – most of which came from Russia. At one time, Russia accounted for 99% of all of China's arms imports. China was the world's third-leading arms importer in 2018 after Saudi Arabia and Australia.

"Russia substantially increased its arms transfers to China, Algeria, and Egypt between 2011 and 2015 and 2016 and 2020 but this did not offset the large drop in its arms exports to India," institute researcher Alexandra Kuimova said.

China threats were the reason Asia and Oceania are the largest importing regions for arms from 2016 to 2020. The institute said the region accounted for 42% of sales.

India, Australia, and South Korea were the biggest arms importers in the region not allied with China.

"For many states in Asia and Oceania, a growing perception of China as a threat is the main driver for arms imports," said institute senior researcher Siemon Wezeman. "More large imports are planned and several states in the region are also aiming to produce their own arms."

China, however, remains the world's second-largest arms producer after the U.S. The institute said one reason for this is because China had modernized its arms industry since the 1960s – and especially since 1999 with the growth of its economy.

The U.S. accounted for 37% of all international arms exports over the past five years. Saudi Arabia, the world's top arms buyer, was responsible for a quarter of those sales.

Source:

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