

# U.S., Russia Remain World's Top Arms Exporters



WASHINGTON — The United States remained far and above the rest of the world as the globe's leading arms exporter, with Russia a distant second, a leading research group says.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said in a **March 11 report** that the gap between the United States and the rest of the world widened further in the most recent five-year period of 2014-18, with American exports rising to 36 percent of the global total from 30 percent in the previous period.

"The U.S.A. has further solidified its position as the world's leading arms supplier," said Aude Fleurant, director of the SIPRI Arms and Military Expenditure Program.

"[It] exported arms to at least 98 countries in the past five years; these deliveries often included advanced weapons such as combat aircraft, short-range cruise and ballistic missiles, and large numbers of guided bombs."

The report highlighted the widening gap between Washington and Moscow in arms exports.

“U.S. exports of major arms were 75 percent higher than Russia’s in 2014–18 period, while they were only 12 percent higher in 2009–13,” SIPRI said in its report of global arms transfers.

“More than half (52 percent) of U.S. arms exports went to the Middle East in 2014–18,” it added.

SIPRI said Russia’s arms exports fell 17 percent in the 2014–18, with a reduction in arms imports by India and Venezuela the major factor in the decline.

The report said France (6.8 percent of the world total) was the third-highest arms exporter, followed by Germany (6.4 percent) and China (5.2 percent).

The top five countries accounted for 75 percent of the world total, the report said.

The combined total of European Union nations came to 27 percent of the global figure.

Among arms importers, Saudi Arabia was the leader, with 12 percent of the world total, up from 4.3 percent in the previous five-year period. Its total imports rose 192 percent in the most-recent period.

“Arms imports by some Arab states of the Gulf rose sharply [during the period],” the report said.

“Among the key reasons behind these increases were the mutual distrust between Iran on the one hand and Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E. [United Arab Emirates] on the other.”

It also cited the conflict in Yemen, considered by many to be a proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia; and the hostilities between a Saudi-led Arab coalition against tiny Gulf state Qatar.

Pakistan was the 11th top importer with 2.7 percent of the global total, but it represented a sharp decline from the 4.8 percent previously. Its main suppliers were China (70 percent), the United States (8.9 percent), and Russia (6 percent).

Its rival, India, was the second-largest importer, with Russia (58 percent), Israel (15 percent), and the United States (12 percent) the top suppliers.

**In a report released in December 2018,** SIPRI said arms exports by U.S.

companies in 2017 amounted to \$222.6 billion, while Russia had \$37.7 billion in arms exports for that one year.

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