



*"and they shall beat their swords  
into ploughshares, and spears  
into pruning hooks; nation shall  
not lift up sword against nation;  
neither shall they learn war any  
more." (Isaiah 2:4)*

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MEDIA RELEASE

### **First audit of Canada's military exports released**

Project Ploughshares has released a detailed audit of the government's report on Canada's military exports. The data, published by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), is for the period 2003–2005.

Although Canada is generally a responsible arms exporter relative to other military suppliers, the audit found that Canadian export control practices, and particularly reporting standards, need to be strengthened. Changes are required to guard against exports to states in conflict and human rights abusing states and to conform to emerging international standards being negotiated through the United Nations.

The major findings of the audit:

- There is no data in the report on Canada's military exports to the United States. Yet, the US is by far the largest recipient of Canadian arms, importing more than double the total value of shipments to all other countries combined. The lack of US data is a major lapse in transparency.
- Canada does not always adhere to its own guidelines when authorizing military transfers. The shipment of armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia – worth over \$400 million during the 2003 to 2005 period – is the most prominent example. Despite clear risks of use of the vehicles against civilian populations, Canada continues to approve shipments to a government regularly cited for human rights violations. Canada's own export control guidelines call for close control in such cases.
- Although Canada was one of the first states to report arms export shipments beginning in 1991, today several states report more comprehensively on their exports. The Canadian record falls short of transparency standards now used by other military supplier states such as Sweden.
- During the report period 2003-2005 there were documented cases of unregulated and unreported civilian equipment shipped by Canada for military end-use. For example, Canadian helicopters were delivered to the armed forces of Pakistan but these were not reported as a military export.
- Canada has been a strong supporter of the proposed international Arms Trade Treaty, but its own export control policy and practice needs to be tightened to meet the emerging international standards that Canada advocates.

*Project Ploughshares is the ecumenical peace centre of The Canadian Council of Churches and affiliated with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo.*

The audit concludes with recommendations to improve Canada's arms export controls.

**“On the Record: An audit of Canada’s report on military exports 2003-2005,”** is available from the Project Ploughshares website at:

<http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/Control/Audit2003-05MilitaryExports.pdf>

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