



CONTROL ON WEAPONS' FLOWS TO CONFLICT ZONES: RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

International transfer of conventional arms has gradually increased in the last decade, bringing European States alongside the United States as the world's leading arms suppliers. Most of weapons' flows are directed to Africa, Asia and Oceania, moving about 60 billion dollars a year.

The European Union has adopted common binding rules – within the Foreign and Security Common Policy – governing transfer of conventional arms to third countries and limiting discretion of Member States in view of the respect, *inter alia*, of international human rights law.

This essay focuses on the issues linked to the application of the Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, which does not provide for a centralized control mechanism; the latter would foster uniform application of the established criteria, whereas the Common Position has not been rightly applied by the Member States, as evidenced by the case of massive arms transfers to Libya, especially in 2011.