

# Arms Revenue and Entitlements: Unearthing the Hidden Costs of Military Spending

In the intricate tapestry of international relations, the arms trade looms large, shaping geopolitical alliances and influencing global power dynamics. The revenue generated from arms sales plays a pivotal role in fueling the military-industrial complex, perpetuating cycles of conflict and undermining efforts towards peace and stability. This article delves into the multifaceted relationship between arms revenue and entitlements, exploring how military spending impacts the allocation of public resources, the well-being of citizens, and the overall economic health of nations.



## Arms, Revenue, and Entitlements: U.S. Deficits in the Cold War, 1945-1991 by Evelyn Farr

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## The Militarization of Public Finances

## The West Dominates Global Arms Sales

Global share of arms sales of companies by country in 2014 (excluding China)



Arms revenue generates substantial income for governments, which can be used to support various public programs. However, prioritizing military spending often comes at the expense of essential social services, such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure development. When governments allocate a disproportionate amount of their budget to the military, they are essentially diverting funds away from sectors that contribute to the well-being and prosperity of their citizens.

### Economic Inequality and Social Disparities

The arms trade exacerbates economic inequality by funneling wealth into the hands of a small number of defense contractors and weapons

manufacturers. These companies often wield significant political influence, shaping government policies in ways that benefit their interests. The resulting concentration of wealth can lead to social disparities, as ordinary citizens struggle to access basic necessities while the wealthy reap the rewards of the arms trade.

### **Missed Opportunities for Sustainable Development**

The resources diverted to arms spending could be redirected towards investments in sustainable development, such as clean energy, education, and healthcare. By prioritizing military power over social progress, governments miss out on opportunities to improve the lives of their citizens and create a more just and equitable world. The arms trade perpetuates a cycle of insecurity and poverty, hindering efforts to achieve true human security.

### **Threats to Public Health and Environmental Degradation**



The production and use of weapons pose significant threats to public health and environmental degradation. The extraction of raw materials for weapons manufacturing often leads to pollution and environmental damage. The testing and use of weapons can release toxic chemicals into the environment, contaminating water sources and harming wildlife. Moreover, armed conflicts displace populations, disrupt access to

healthcare, and destroy essential infrastructure, leaving lasting scars on communities.

## Promoting Peace and Security through Entitlements

In contrast to arms spending, investing in entitlements can promote peace and security by addressing the root causes of conflict. Providing citizens with access to quality healthcare, education, and economic opportunities can reduce poverty, inequality, and social unrest. By empowering individuals and fostering a sense of social justice, entitlements contribute to a more stable and peaceful society.

The arms trade is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires urgent attention. The revenue generated from arms sales fuels the military-industrial complex and perpetuates cycles of conflict, while undermining efforts towards peace and stability. By prioritizing arms revenue over entitlements, governments miss out on opportunities to invest in sustainable development, improve public health, and promote social justice. It is time for a transformative shift in our approach to national security, one that emphasizes peacebuilding, diplomacy, and the well-being of all citizens.



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