

## **The Importance of U.S. Signature on the Arms Trade Treaty: Letter from 31 National Organizations**

August 19, 2013

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We congratulate your Administration for helping to successfully conclude negotiations for an effective global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) earlier this year. The U.S. decision to join other leading supporters of the ATT helped overcome the consensus-blocking actions of three states and was critical to securing the overwhelming support for the treaty at the UN General Assembly on April 2. With the process of conforming the Treaty text in various languages to be resolved this month, we urge the US government to emphatically throw its support behind the treaty with your signature at the United Nations in New York in September.

Your signature would be a powerful step demonstrating the United States' commitment to preventing mass atrocities and protecting civilians from armed conflict around the globe. We also encourage you to make a strong, high-profile statement of the Treaty's value for national and international security and human rights protection at time of signature.

The development of the Arms Trade Treaty was a historic achievement. Governments joined together and agreed to a plan that will, if implemented rigorously and universally, put an end to the irresponsible arms trade that fuels so much suffering in the world. The ATT is a common sense agreement that will have positive impacts for US security and civilians living in the midst of armed conflict or unstable environments. Among other things, the ATT prohibits arms transfer authorizations to states if the state "has knowledge at the time of authorization that the arms or items would be used in the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such, or other war crimes."

We urge you to seize the opportunity to sign as soon as possible in order to build momentum for additional signatures and rapid entry into force. If the United States clearly signals its intent to be bound by the Treaty, other countries currently sitting on the fence are more likely to follow.

Your Administration demonstrated leadership by supporting the Treaty through its development. Signing the ATT will demonstrate strong US leadership and help create important momentum for the treaty.

We respectfully encourage you and your Administration to seize this historic opportunity and provide US signature on the Arms Trade Treaty this September.

Sincerely,

Melanie Greenberg, President and CEO  
Alliance for Peacebuilding

Shan Cretin, General Secretary  
American Friends Service Committee

Eric Sapp, Executive Director  
American Values Network

Frank Jannuzi, Interim Co-Executive Director  
Amnesty International, USA

Daryl G. Kimball, Executive Director  
Arms Control Association

Sarah Holewinski, Executive Director  
Center for Civilians in Conflict

Stanley J. Noffsinger, General Secretary  
Church of the Brethren

Kathi Lynn Austin, Executive Director  
Conflict Awareness Project

Alexander D. Baumgarten, Director of Government Relations  
The Episcopal Church

Dennis W. Frado, Director, Lutheran Office for World Community  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Emira Woods, Co-Director  
Foreign Policy In Focus

Diane Randall, Executive Secretary  
Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)

Krista Hendry, Executive Director  
The Fund for Peace

Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, President  
Genocide Watch

Don Kraus, President & CEO  
Globalsolutions.org

Kenneth Roth, Executive Director  
Human Rights Watch

Michael Christ, Executive Director  
International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War

Robert Naiman, Policy Director  
Just Foreign Policy

Gerry G. Lee, Director  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

J. Ron Byler, Executive Director  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Galen Carey, Vice President for Government Relations  
National Association of Evangelicals

Raymond C. Offenheiser, President  
Oxfam America

Hon. Ross Robertson MP, President  
Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA)

Patricia Chappell, SNDdeN, Executive Director  
Pax Christi USA

Jon Rainwater, Executive Director  
Peace Education Fund

Catherine Thomasson, MD, Executive Director  
Physicians for Social Responsibility

Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, Director, Office of Public Witness  
Presbyterian Church (USA)

James E. Winkler, General Secretary, General Board of Church and Society  
The United Methodist Church

Mary-Frances Wain, Deputy Executive Director  
UN Association of the United States of America

Thomas H. Andrews, President and CEO  
United to End Genocide

Joy Olson, Executive Director  
Washington Office on Latin America