The Trump administration made $78.8 billion in arms deals in 2018, more than enough to sustain the U.S. role as the world’s number one weapons exporting nation.

1/4th
One-quarter of U.S. arms deals in 2018 were for licenses to manufacture U.S. weapons overseas.

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Less than 0.002%
Arms sales create only a fraction of the number of jobs claimed by President Trump and the arms industry. In all, less than two-tenths of one percent of U.S. jobs are tied to arms exports, and many of those jobs involve production of U.S. arms in other countries.

• Arms Makers Cash In: A handful of corporations were the main beneficiaries of U.S. arms exports. The top five arms exporters, based on deals of $500 million or more, were Lockheed Martin, which was involved in deals worth $25 billion; Boeing, $7.1 billion in deals; Raytheon, $5.5 billion in deals; Northrop Grumman, had one deal worth $2.5 billion; and BAE systems, which had a $1.3 billion deal.

• Regional Shift to Europe & Eurasia: There was a sharp shift in the regional distribution of U.S. arms sales from 2017 to 2018. Offers to Europe and Eurasia accounted for 55% of deals in 2018, nearly double the region’s 29.5% share in 2017. Deals with countries in the Middle East and North Africa dropped from 36.6% in 2017 to 21.9% in 2018.

Firearms offers increased by more than 14% in 2018, to $759 million from $662 million in 2017. The biggest recipient by far was Saudi Arabia, with over $579 million in deals. Other sales of concern include a deal for the Philippines, where police and military forces have engaged in extrajudicial killings that have left thousands dead and injured.

Recommendations:

A number of steps can and should be taken to increase transparency and accountability in U.S. arms sales:

- End exports to regimes involved in internal repression and allies engaging in unjust wars, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the Philippines, Bahrain, and Nigeria.

- Make it easier for members of Congress to be notified and act in advance of deliveries of U.S. arms, not just original offers.

- Maintain notification of commercial sales, particularly firearms, to Congress.

- Notify Congress and publish reports on offset deals and production of U.S. arms overseas.

- Make it possible for members of the House of Representatives to force a vote on a resolution of disapproval on specific arms sales, as is now the case in the Senate.

*Global indicates an arms sales offer that includes multiple countries.

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