International Arms Treaty
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First Year Seminar 20, COM 155, Professor Ingrid Griffith

Introduction
Jeff Cooper, a U.S. Marine, once said, "Remember the first rule of gun fighting... 'Have a gun.'" The United Nations sees this as fact and wishes to limit the trade of weapons internationally. This is done to end as many of these "gun fights" before they even take place.

Research Question
The three key things to know about this International Arms Treaty are:

• What is it?
• Why was it made?
• What needs to be done to make it a reality?

Methods
Through articles from the New York Times, Nature Magazine, and statements by Under Secretary, Ellen Tauscher, I will explain to you just why this treaty is being made; the reason why this is important for all of you to hear this is because here in the United States we are constantly hearing about gun violence and proposals to limit the purchase of these weapons.

Findings
This treaty, or formal document embodying an international agreement, is trying to limit the trading of weapons between countries.

• According to the New York Times the treaty, created by the U.N., has been in the works for the past seven years.
• So far the treaty has 114 signatures from supporting countries.
• Some of those supporting countries are: Mexico; Australia; France; United States; Iceland; Nigeria; Germany.

This treaty is trying to decrease the devastation that weapons traded among nations cause.

• As stated in the New York Times, countries that are almost always in conflict are the ones that usually participate in the buying of weapons.
• Such as: Syria; Congo; Iran.
• As said in Nature Magazine, "...peace-keeping is generally necessary only because aggressors have been supplied with military hardware..."

According to a New York Times article, the treaty is really close to being ratified or approved.

• According to the Times as of September 25, 2013, 114, of the 193 members of the U.N., countries have signed the treaty.
• As stated in the same Times article, in addition to the signatures, the nations have to ratify or approve the treaty.

Conclusions
At the Rubin Museum of Art, there was a painting called the Wheel of Existence, which showed possible outcomes that could occur depending on how you live your life. Behind the wheel is a demonic-looking creature with sharp claws clutching the wheel. This creature is actually a sort of judge that decides where you will go based on your deeds. This creature is considered a protector. Right now the U.N. is taking on the same role but, instead of waiting for another atrocity to occur, it is acting now and is passing its judgment. With that in mind I will leave you all with a quote by Eliot Spitzer, former New York State Governor and New York State Attorney General, "Yes, people pull the trigger - but guns are the instrument of death..."

References
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