The issue of Regulation of Arms Sales and Military Aid to Nations in Conflict.

The regulation of arms and Military aid is an important part of maintaining international peace and security. Arms transfers can significantly exacerbate conflicts and undermine efforts for sustainable peace. The international arms trade is a multi-billion-pound industry, with major exporters including the united states, Russia, China, France and Germany. Arms are often supplied to conflict zones but can end up in the wrong hands, prolonging violence.

The black market for arms thrives in conflict zones, which can undermined global arms control efforts. Moreover, when non-state groups acquire weapons through illegal means it only adds to the instability of a conflict zone. However, arms embargoes and treaties are often violated due to weak enforcement mechanisms and limited monitoring capabilities.

Nations that have been involved in arms sales and military aid to nations in conflict are those such as the United states, UK, France, Russia, Germany and Spain as well as others. In 2013 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty – ATT – to help governments decide whether or not to authorise arms transfers.

Furthermore, unregulated arms sales can have significant humanitarian consequences. For example due to external arms supplies from multiple states, you have one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises in Yemen, as millions of civilians have suffered from consequences such as famine and displacement.

Points to consider

* How can we promote greater transparency in arms sales and trade?
* How can military aid be provided without fuelling conflicts?
* What measures can be taken to enhance compliance with the Arms Trade Treaty and other international frameworks?
* What can be done to effectively help curb the black market for weapons in conflict zones?
* What responsibilities do nations – especially ones which are major exporters - bear in ensuring that their weapons do not exacerbate conflicts?

Links/sources

* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/arms-control/>
* <https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/att/>