

Abstract

This master's thesis focuses on Russian international trade of conventional weapons. Arms trade had played an important role during the Cold War as a tool to gain influence. Currently, Russia is using it to regain the influence it had lost after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in various regions around the world. At the same time, Russia is the second largest arms exporter after the United States. The thesis briefly addresses past Russian arms trade, but the main focus is on the decade between 2010 and 2020. It answers the question whether Russia currently uses its arms trade opportunistically to only maximalise its economic profit or whether it serves as a part of a larger strategy to balance the influence of the United States. The work focuses on Asia, the MENA region, and Latin America. It analyses circumstances surrounding arms deliveries from Russia into the countries in these regions. The thesis consists of several case studies, which illustrate the evolution of Russian approach towards arms trade. It reaches the conclusion that, for Russia, international arms trade is an important tool to help reach its foreign policy goals. Russia maintains strong and stable relations with the most important trade partners to support its defence industry. At the same time, other countries receive Russian weapons as the result of its efforts to extend its influence even though the sales are not as profitable.