

## Conference on *Arms Trade, Security and Conflict*

[Back to Previous Page](#)

An ECAAR sponsored conference on "The Arms Trade, Security and Conflict" was held at Middlesex University Business School on 11-12 June. Funded by the Arms Trade Research Group involving members of Economics Departments at the Universities of Surrey, Birmingham, Middlesex and Birkbeck College London, it marked the end of their project on modeling the arms trade. About 50 people attended from various part of Europe, the U.S. and Africa. Provocative presentations and discussion engaged both researchers and activists on topics ranging from case studies to complex theoretical models.

The first keynote address by Keith Hartley (York, U.K.) on The Costs and Benefits of the Arms Trade, systematically set out the costs and benefits of the United Kingdom's arms trade, showing that the economic rationale for exports was less than clearcut. He used nuclear submarine production as an example of defense production without exports, where the true costs of the venture can be measured. The second keynote address by Todd Sandler (Iowa State) on Alliance Formation, Expansion and the Core was an impressive exposition of a complex paper on how the spatial nature of countries and their potential allies can impact upon the nature and success of any alliance.

The keynote addresses were supported by a wide range of papers, 17 in all. ECAAR Vice Chair Jurgen Brauer (Augusta), showed not only that the number of developing nations with the potential to produce arms has increased considerably over the past 10 years, but also showed a strong statistical correlation between arms production potential and actual arms production. This point was discussed in relation to questions concerning the practicality of supply-oriented arms control regimes.

Other papers on the arms trade, arms races, arms production and arms control added to the breadth of coverage of some of the most important policy issues facing the modern world. The range of institutional, theoretical and econometric analyses across a range of countries was impressive and provided substantial contributions to the literature.

Conference feedback suggested that both researchers and campaigners had gained valuable knowledge and enjoyed engaging in the high level debates and discussions, which were conducted in a friendly and constructive manner. Papers from the conference are to be published, and selected papers will make up a special issue of Defence and Peace Economics. Further details are available at: [www.mdx.ac.uk/www/economics](http://www.mdx.ac.uk/www/economics).

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