



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 27, 2013

House Committee Approves Funding Ban on UN Gun Grab

As approved by the House Appropriations Committee on July 24, [the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2014](#) includes a provision to impose a one-year ban on the use of federal funds for the implementation of the United Nations Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the State Department.

The provision is based on language from Representative Mike Kelly (R-Penn.; shown), who is a dedicated opponent of the global gun grab. Kelly [issued the following statement](#) after the committee vote:



I am thrilled to see the House [once again](#) take action to stop the ATT from ever shackling our liberty at home or our indispensable leadership abroad. This treaty remains as much a threat to American freedom and sovereignty as ever. Even as the Obama administration shamefully pledges to eventually sign the ATT, the American people deserve assurance that their Second Amendment rights will not be allowed to be endangered by unaccountable international bureaucrats at any time. As events on the global stage continue to grow more dangerous and unpredictable, our nation must never permit any entity to undermine our status as the world's greatest defender of peace and freedom, or the alliances which ensure both. It is my sincere hope that President Obama and Secretary Kerry will respect the will of the American people as represented by Congress and abandon their support for this harmful and needless treaty.

The text of Kelly's ban is based on [a bipartisan letter he authored](#) and submitted to President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry petitioning the administration not to sign the ATT.

The letter is signed by a total of 130 members of Congress — including Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon (R-Calif.), Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.), and Rules Committee Chairman Pete Sessions (R-Texas) — and declares all of the signatories' opposition to "both the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty and any effort to treat it as internationally or domestically binding upon the United States."

Rep. Kelly further states in the letter,

As the signing period for the ATT gets underway next week, President Obama has an opportunity to take a monumental stand for our national sovereignty and our Constitutional rights. The ATT threatens both of these things and should be fully rejected. Any treaty that would put the United States — the world's defender of peace and freedom — on equal footing with the world's worst dictatorships and terror-sponsors ought to be condemned, dismissed, and ultimately denied our country's signature. I sincerely hope the administration will listen to the [very real objections](#) my colleagues from both parties in Congress share and rightly decide that joining the ATT is not at all in America's interest.

To say that the Arms Trade Treaty is not at all in America's interest is an understatement.



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As we have reported, several provisions of this treaty significantly diminish the scope of the right to keep and bear arms.

First, [the Arms Trade Treaty](#) grants a monopoly over all weaponry in the hands of the very entity (approved regimes) responsible for over 300 million murders in the 20th century.

Furthermore, the treaty leaves private citizens powerless to oppose future slaughters.

An irrefutable fact of armed violence unaddressed by the UN in its gun grab is that all the murders committed by all the serial killers in history don't amount to a fraction of the brutal killings committed by "authorized state parties" using the very weapons over which they will exercise absolute control under the terms of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Article 2 of the treaty defines the scope of the treaty's prohibitions. The right to own, buy, sell, trade, or transfer all means of armed resistance, including handguns, is denied to civilians by this section of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Article 3 places the "ammunition/munitions fired, launched or delivered by the conventional arms covered under Article 2" within the scope of the treaty's prohibitions, as well.

Article 4 rounds out the regulations, also placing all "parts and components" of weapons within the scheme.

Perhaps the most immediate threat to the rights of gun owners in the Arms Trade Treaty is found in Article 5. Under the title of "General Implementation," Article 5 mandates that all countries participating in the treaty "shall establish and maintain a national control system, including a national control list."

This list should "apply the provisions of this Treaty to the broadest range of conventional arms."

Mark it down: If the treaty is ratified by the United States, within months the federal government (likely under the management of the Department of Homeland Security) would begin compiling a list of who owns, buys, sells, trades, or transfers any firearm, as well as the ammunition, parts, and components of those weapons. After creating this database, the federal government would be required under the provisions of Article 5(4) of the Arms Trade Treaty to "provide its national control list to the Secretariat, which shall make it available to other States Parties."

That's right. The UN treaty demands that the list of gun and ammunition owners not only be in the hands of our own government, but be sent to foreign regimes, as well. This provision would guarantee that should an American owner of a legally purchased firearm decide to emigrate, he will be on the radar of the ruling regime in his new home.

Americans are right to recognize this registry as the first step toward confiscation. Without such a registry, it would be impossible to monitor weapons transfers effectively because governments can't track weapons exchanges and transfers unless they know who has them to begin with.

Article 12 adds to the record-keeping requirement, mandating that the list include "the quantity, value, model/type, authorized international transfers of conventional arms," as well as the identity of the "end users" of these items.

In very clear terms, ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty by the United States would require that the U.S. government force gun owners to add their names to the national registry. Citizens would be required to report the amount and type of all firearms and ammunition they possess.



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Section 4 of Article 12 of the treaty requires that the list be kept for at least 10 years.

Although the White House has not announced when the president will sign the document, Secretary Kerry said that in the United States “we look forward to signing it [the Arms Trade Treaty] as soon as the process of conforming the official translations is completed satisfactorily.”

Finally, the agreement demands that national governments take “appropriate measures” to enforce the terms of the treaty, including civilian disarmament. If these countries can’t get this done on their own, however, Article 16 provides for UN assistance, specifically including help with the enforcement of “stockpile management, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.”

In fact, a “voluntary trust fund” will be established to assist those countries that need help from UN peacekeepers or other regional forces to disarm their citizens.

The UN Arms Trade Treaty opened for national signatures on June 3, 2013, and will enter into force for its signatories 90 days after the 50th member state ratifies the treaty.

To date, [79 nations have signed the treaty](#) and two — Iceland and Guyana — have ratified it.

Arguably, the ATT will become the law of the United States after the treaty is signed by the president and ratified by the Senate.

While that is the process that the Constitution establishes for the implementation of treaties, fundamental principles of construction and constitutional law dictate that no treaty that violates the Constitution may enjoy the legitimization of that document.

In the case of the ATT, there is no doubt that regardless of presidential signatures or congressional consent, this treaty cannot pass constitutional muster and therefore will never be the valid law of the land.

Photo of Rep. Mike Kelly: AP Images

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