

*Tuesday, 12 June 2012 - Strasbourg*

Pino Arlacchi (S&D) . - Madam President, the international community devotes a great amount of time and resources to the issue of weapons of mass destruction that have a very small chance of being used. Countries are invaded and wars are fought for a threat that is largely improbable. At the same time, conventional weapons and small arms kill tens of thousands of people every year and this issue is almost unnoticed.

So this Arms Trade Treaty is welcome. The Socialists and Democrats regret that the EU Member States continue to sell large amounts of weapons to dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and countries whose leaders use weapons to suppress dissent. The same Member States, on the other hand, declare their support for democracy and human rights every day. But the conventional weapons and small arms often sold by them are the material instrument of the most blatant crimes. These small arms and weapons have been extensively used in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya against peaceful demonstrators. So, any instrument like this treaty that goes in the direction of resolving these unacceptable paradoxes and contradictions is welcomed by us.