

# The Arms Flyers

Commercial Aviation, Human Rights, and the Business of War and Arms



By Sergio Finardi & Peter Danssaert

International Peace Information Service and TransArms Research

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In the last decades, the “business of war” has attracted thousands of civilian transport and logistics companies, especially in the aviation sector. State and non-State actors engaged in armed conflicts or in military operations have increasingly resorted to the services of civilian transport operators to fulfill their transport and logistics needs.

This report presents (Part I and Part II, Chapter 1-10) a series of cases - from the 1980s to the present - documenting the continuous involvement of aviation companies in the business of war and covert operations, often resulting in severe violations of human rights. The cases - rigorously researched and documented - show the variety of motivations, techniques, and business relationships that have shaped the involvement of commercial aviation in the business of war.

The report then offers (Part III) an analysis of national and international laws on the transport of weapons by air (Chapter 11) and a discussion of air safety regulations as enacted in the US and in Europe (Chapter 12), including an assessment of the European Union list of banned air companies. Finally, Chapter 13 deals with the fundamentally flawed research that constituted much of the basis for European Union recent projects to fight arms trafficking by air. An analysis of the present situation in air cargo markets and its influence on the logistics of wars and humanitarian operations concludes the report.

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The Report and its Addendum with documents is available online at:  
<http://www.ipisresearch.be/arms-trade.php>

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Photo Credit Front Page: St. Lucia Airways' Boeing 707, J6-SLF, photographed in Ostend by Paul Van Damme. The aircraft was used for illegal deliveries of missiles to Iran in 1985.