WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT

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Roots

- Cold War-era Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (COCOM)

- COCOM existed from 1950 to 1994, and consisted of 17 States
  - Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and United States.

- It was a non-treaty, non-chartered organization.

- **Goal**: To restrict the export of sensitive items that, if diverted, could contribute significantly to military potential and the proliferation of weapon systems, creating instability and international tension.
  - Particularly, Communist States.
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1990: COCOM began helping Eastern European States adopt controls to stem the proliferation of military technology.

COCOM also played a role in coordinating efforts to prevent “brain-drain,” particularly in the review of projects supported by any member government.

1993: U.S.-Russian Summit in Vancouver, Canada
- The presidents of Russia and the United States agreed that it was necessary to achieve the earliest possible resolution of questions about cooperation in the nonproliferation of missiles and missile technology, in accordance with the principles of existing international Arrangements.
- They decided to work together to remove obstacles impeding Russia’s access to the global market in high technology and related services.
Basic, yet important facts


- **Nomenclature**: Wassenaar, a suburb of the Hague, the Netherlands.  
  - It was here where an Arrangement was reached in 1995 to start a new type of multilateral co-operation.

- **Secretariat**: Vienna (Austria)  
  - Most Wassenaar Arrangement meetings are held in the Secretariat.  
  - Meets mostly in December

- **Working Language**: English

- **Decision-making body**: Wassenaar Arrangement Plenary
The position of Plenary Chair is subject to annual rotation among Participating States.

- 2016 Finland
- 2017 France

All Plenary decisions are taken by consensus.
Participating States: 42

- Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States.

Note: Apart from China all P5 members of UNSC are on board.

Aim: To contribute to regional and international security and stability
Wassenaar Arrangement prevents destabilising accumulations

How? By promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies

Participating States seek, through their national policies, to ensure that transfers of these items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities which undermine these goals, and are not diverted to support such capabilities.

The decision to transfer or deny the transfer of any item is the sole responsibility of each Participating State.
All measures: implemented on the basis of **national discretion**.

Although the scope of export controls in Participating States is determined by Wassenaar Arrangement lists, practical implementation varies from country to country in accordance with **national procedures**.

Complements and reinforces the **control** regimes for weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

**INFORMATION SHARING FALLS UNDER EIGHT BROAD WEAPONS CATEGORIES:** battle tanks, armoured fighting vehicles, large-calibre artillery, military aircraft, military helicopters, warships, missiles or missile systems, and small arms and light weapons.

**EVERY 6 MONTHS MEMBER COUNTRIES exchange information on deliveries of conventional arms to non-Wassenaar Arrangement members**.
At present, the main Wassenaar Arrangement subsidiary bodies are:

1. General Working Group (GWG) dealing with policy-related matters
2. Experts Group (EG) addressing issues related to the lists of controlled items.
3. Once a year, a Licensing and Enforcement Officers Meeting (LEOM) is held.

Vienna Points of Contact (VPOC) are called for periodic meetings under the Plenary Chair to facilitate intersessional information flow and communications between/among Participating States and the Secretariat.

The current Head of Secretariat is Ambassador Philip Griffiths (New Zealand).
What it means for India?

- Since its civil nuclear deal with the US, India has been trying to get into export control regimes such as the
  - NSG: Nuclear Suppliers Group
  - MTCR: Missile Technology Control Regime
  - Australia Group
  - Wassenaar Arrangement

- These regimes regulate the conventional, nuclear, biological and chemicals weapons and technologies.

- India joined the MTCR in 2016 and its in a very advanced stage regarding the Australian Group.
WA: Wassenaar Arrangement (Conventional arms & Dual-use)

AG: Australia Group (Chemical and Biological)
MTCR: Missile Technology Control Regime (Missiles)
NSG: Nuclear Suppliers Group (Nuclear)
ZC: Zangger Committee (Nuclear)
Significant victory for India's non-proliferation track record

Expected to raise New Delhi’s stature further in the field of non-proliferation.

Help India in acquiring critical technologies.

Build up a strong case for India's entry into the 48-member Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

- China stonewalled India's entry into NSG

Besides USA, Russia and France played key roles in ensuring India’s membership to Wassenaar Arrangement.
Russia has come out strongly in support of India.
- India‘s application cannot be "interlinked" with that of Pakistan.
- Moscow is discussing the issue with Beijing at different levels.

- Expected to facilitate high technology tie-ups with Indian industry and ease of access to high tech items for our defence and space programmes.

- For greater access to such necessary technology and product exports, India will still have to apply for licences, but the entire application procedure is expected to get easier.
Critics

- WA simply as a **Cold War instrument** with a different name.

- WA perpetuates a digital divide by restricting western companies and governments from supplying crucial technologies to emerging markets.

- Computer scientists and policy analysts have also expressed concern about developed economies using less developed countries as **Guinea Pigs** for their cyber security research by supplying them with intrusive technologies that could be used for mass surveillance.

- The **Electronic Frontier Foundation**, a digital rights group, has accused the United States of going for even narrower restrictions on technology transfer.
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