



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Military Exports

Thank you for contacting me about military exports.

I fully appreciate why there is much concern about the global arms trade. I can assure you the Government takes UK's arms export responsibilities very seriously, and operates one of the most rigorous arms export control regimes in the world.

All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National arms export licensing Criteria, known as the consolidated Criteria. We draw on all available information, including reports from NGOs and our overseas network. Risks around human rights violations are a key part of this assessment. We do not export equipment where we assess there is a clear risk that it might be used for internal repression, that it might provoke or prolong conflict within a country, or where it may be used aggressively against another country.

I am satisfied that the Government is not in breach of these international standards. Furthermore, I believe firmly that commercial relationships do not prevent us from speaking frankly to governments about issues of concern, such as human rights. Our close political and security relationships can help enhance our scope to positively influence governments helping to promote democratic reform and raise human rights standards in places such as the Persian Gulf.

I am pleased the Government secured the establishment of the first ever International Arms Trade Treaty to control exports of conventional arms. It will require governments to block transfers of weapons that pose unacceptable risks and to take strong steps to prevent weapons being diverted into illegal markets. I am sure you will join me in welcoming this first legally-binding, truly global commitment.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Edward Timpson

Edward Timpson MP

EDWARD TIMPSON

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