



Department for International Trade

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The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
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By email: kate.brady@parliament.uk

12th January 2021

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 4th January, on behalf of your constituents, regarding arms exports. I have been asked to reply, as this matter falls within my brief.

HM Government takes its export control responsibilities extremely seriously. All export licence applications are assessed against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria (the 'Consolidated Criteria').

The Consolidated Criteria take into account our obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty and other relevant rules of international law. They provide a thorough risk assessment framework and require us to think hard about the possible impact of providing equipment and its capabilities. These are not decisions we take lightly.

We will not grant an export licence if to do so would be inconsistent with the Consolidated Criteria, including if there is a clear risk that the items may be used for internal repression, or the items may be used in the commission of a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

Your constituent may wish to know that, following the events on the Israel/Gaza border during May 2018, we reviewed all extant military export licences for Israel. We found no information to indicate that British-supplied equipment has been used in a way that is inconsistent with the Consolidated Criteria.

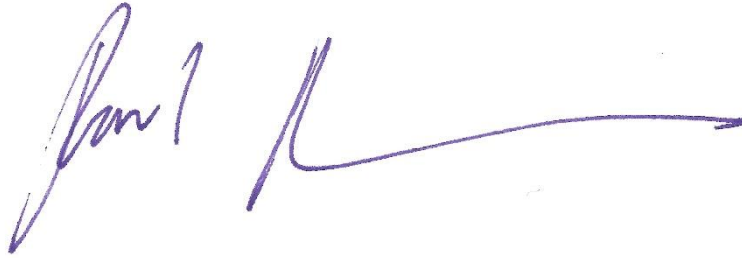
HM Government continues to monitor closely the situation in Israel and the West Bank. We can review licences – and suspend or revoke as necessary – when circumstances require, and this is done in line with the Consolidated Criteria.

On 7th July 2020, in a written statement to Parliament^[1], the Secretary of State confirmed that steps had been taken to comply with the judgment of the Court of Appeal of 20th June 2019 regarding licences for military exports to Saudi Arabia for possible use in the conflict in Yemen. She confirmed that the decisions – which were the subject of the judicial review – had been re-taken on the correct legal basis. She also set out details of the revised methodology developed for this.

I hope this letter is of reassurance to you and your constituents.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ranil Jayawardena', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

RANIL JAYAWARDENA MP
Minister for International Trade

^[1] <https://bit.ly/3ffpogL>