

Council's annual report in accordance with the operative provision 8 of the European Union Code of Conduct on arms exports

2018/2157(INI) - 14/11/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 427 votes to 150, with 97 abstentions, a resolution on arms exports: implementation of Common Position 2008/944/CFSP.

According to the latest figures, arms exports from the EU-28 amounted to over 27 % of the global total in 2013-2017, which would make the EU collectively the **second largest arms supplier in the world** after the US (34 %), with Russia following at 22 %.

[Common Position 2008/944/CFSP](#) is a legally binding framework laying down **eight criteria** for exports of military technology and equipment. However, they are **applied and interpreted in different ways** by Member States.

Arms exports and transfers have an undeniable impact on human rights and human security, on socio-economic development and on democracy. Members stated that this justified establishing a strict, transparent and effective arms control system that is established and accepted by all parties.

Strengthening the common position and improving its implementation: Parliament called for a **uniform, consistent and coordinated application** of the eight criteria and full implementation of the common position and all related obligations.

Members deplored the lack of systematic application of the eight criteria by Member States and the fact that military technologies does not reach destinations and end-users that do not meet the criteria set out in the common position. They requested an independent assessment of the Member State's compliance with the criteria of the common position and suggested launching a process to develop a sanction mechanism against Member States that do not comply with the common position.

Members called for a precautionary principle to be **added to the risk assessment method** for export authorisations. Member States should therefore assess the risks in the light of the overall situation in the country of destination, taking into account factors such as the state of democracy and the rule of law and its socio-economic development. Member States and the EEAS were invited to use the ongoing review process to **strengthen the mechanisms for exchanging information** on risk assessments related to authorisations.

Saudi Arabia: arms exported to countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and members of the Saudi-led coalition have been used in conflicts such as **Yemen**. Parliament stated that these exports were clearly in violation of the common position and reiterated its call for the urgent need to impose an **arms embargo** on Saudi Arabia.

Members congratulated Member States such as **Germany and the Netherlands**, which have changed their position on the Yemeni conflict while regretting that other Member States seem not to take into account the behaviour of the destination country and the end user of the exported arms and ammunition.

In addition, Parliament expressed its dismay at the quantities of weapons and ammunition manufactured in the EU, which were found in the hands of **Da'esh in Syria and Iraq**. It noted the effective non-

compliance by Bulgaria and Romania with the common position with regard to retransfers that contravene the provisions of the end-user certificate. It called on all Member States to refuse similar transfers in the future and demanded the strict application of the common position as regards licensed production in third countries.

Review of the common position: Parliament recalled the detrimental effect that insufficiently controlled exports of **cybersurveillance** technologies by EU companies can have on the security of the EU's digital infrastructure and on respect for human rights. In this respect, it stressed the importance of a rapid, effective and comprehensive update of the EU's Dual-Use Regulation.

Members suggested that the **scope of the eight criteria be extended**: they should also cover the transfer of military, security and police personnel, know-how and training related to arms exports, security technologies and armed and private security services. In addition, a **new criterion** should be added to ensure that corruption risks related to exports are duly taken into account in the granting of export authorisations.

The Member States and the EEAS are called on to cooperate closely in order to prevent **risks arising from the diverting and stockpiling of weapons**, such as illegal arms trafficking and smuggling.

Conventional Arms Exports annual report (COARM): Parliament criticised the fact that a number of Member States did not make full submissions to the nineteenth annual report on the basis of detailed, country-specific data. They suggested that a standardised verification and reporting system should be established to provide more detailed and exhaustive information. It also called for a **transparent and robust control mechanism** which bolsters the role of **parliaments and of civil society**.

International arms control and disarmament: Members believe that the EU should meet its increased responsibility for **peace and security** in Europe and the world by means of further improved export control mechanisms and disarmament initiatives. They reiterated their call for a ban on exports of products used in the development and production of autonomous lethal weapon systems.