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CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

31st July 2020

Jew Content,

RE: EXPORT CONTROLS & YEMEN.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of export controls, specifically in relation to the crisis in Yemen; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

I know the Government takes its export control responsibilities extremely seriously and operates one of the most robust export control regimes anywhere in the world. All export licence applications are rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the *Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria*, based on the most up-to-date information and analysis available.

These consolidated criteria provide a thorough risk assessment framework and require the Government to think hard about the impact of providing equipment and its capabilities.

Licence decisions take account of prevailing circumstances at the time of application and include human rights and international humanitarian law considerations. I understand the Government will not issue export licences where there is a clear risk that the goods might be used for internal repression, or in the commission of a serious violation of international humanitarian law.

In addition, the Government can attach conditions to licences, and in line with the consolidated criteria, it can review licences and suspend or revoke as necessary when circumstances require.

You may be interested to know that quarterly and annual statistics on all export licensing decisions are published on the 'Gov.uk' website and include details of export licences granted, refused and revoked.

I fully appreciate your concerns about military exports to Saudi Arabia. I want to reassure you that in accordance with the Court of Appeal's judgement in June of last year, the Secretary of State for International Trade has now retaken licensing decisions regarding military exports to Saudi Arabia for possible use in the conflict in Yemen, on the correct legal basis.



New licence applications will be assessed against a revised methodology, which evaluates whether there is a clear risk that the equipment might be used in the commission of a serious violation of international humanitarian law. On this basis, I understand Ministers are now in a position to begin the process of addressing licence applications for Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners again.

I have been assured that each application will be carefully assessed against the *Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria* and that a licence will not be granted if to do so would be a breach of the criteria.

Regarding Yemen more broadly, I am deeply concerned by the ongoing conflict and humanitarian crisis. I fully support the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and the UN Special Envoy's call for all parties to engage in urgent political talks and de-escalate the conflict. A political settlement is crucial to bringing long-term stability to Yemen and to addressing the worsening humanitarian crisis.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**