

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

March 2020

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about arms exports and Early Day Motion (EDM) 24.

Members of the Government do not, by convention, sign any Early Day Motions as doing so is likely to breach the Ministerial Code's rules on collective responsibility. However, as far as I am aware, the Government is not currently considering setting up a specific Select Committee on Arms Export Controls. I appreciate this is not the response you had hoped for, but I want to reassure you that there is already considerable scrutiny of UK arms exports by four Parliamentary committees, including by the Defence, International Trade, Foreign Affairs and International Development Select Committees. These four committees work together to scrutinise the UK's arms exports and are known as the Committees on Arms Export Controls.

I know that the Government itself takes its defence export responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust export control regimes in the world. Indeed, export licence applications are rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. Consideration is given to the prevailing circumstances at the time of application and includes human rights and international humanitarian law considerations.

The Government will not issue export licences where there is a clear risk that the goods might be used for internal repression, in the commission of a serious violation of international humanitarian law, or where the export would provoke or prolong conflict.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTY

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