

FINLAND'S ARMS EXPORTS IN 2009

Peace and Security Research Network SaferGlobe Finland published its report on the Finnish arms trade in 2009. The report's primary theme was the export of dual-use technology. Finnish arms exports doubled during the period 2005-2009 compared to the previous five-year period. Entirely new arms trade partners in 2009 included states such as Lebanon and Mexico.

A central question-raising part of the annual report is the so-called "gray list" which intends to draw attention to arms export to states to which the export is or may be contrary to official Finnish foreign and security policy or the EU's Common Position on arms exports. Such states include non-democratic or developing states, states where human rights are gravely and constantly violated, where the violence-related mortality is high, or where there is an armed conflict or war.

SaferGlobe Finland also assesses the Finnish authorities' reporting practices regarding the exports of arms and military technology, which in many respects are still quite inadequate. The report also highlights the problems with corruption in the arms trade. In 2009 alone, there were four ongoing investigations in Finland related to corruption in arms trade.

Suomen asevientä 2009: Kaksoiskäyttöteknologia - aseita, jotka eivät näytä aseilta. Pamela Baarman and Jarmo Pykälä (Eds.), SaferGlobe Finland 2011. 32 pages.

MINISTER HAUTALA: FINLAND'S ARMS EXPORT TO BE SCRUTINIZED

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The Finnish Minister of Development, **Heidi Hautala** (The Greens of Finland), former MEP and chair of the EU Commission's Human Rights subcommittee, said that the limits and targets for arms exports, foreign policy and development cooperation "should be aligned."

According to the report, Finland grants arms export licenses to several states where human rights are consistently breached. In addition, export licenses worth millions of euros have been granted to Egypt, a state that for decades has been a partner state for Finnish development cooperation.

- Coherence in different sectors of our policymaking needs to be the central principle for the development programme. From this point of view there has been very little attention paid to arms exports in the past, she says.

Transparency and consistency are needed to get rid of these contradictions, she says, but is not prepared at this point to evaluate any specific states or licenses granted. Hautala proposes that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be the ministry to grant export licenses,

instead of the current Ministry of Defense. With the current regulations, the Ministry of Defense decides on export licensing, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has an advisory role.

- Questions regarding export criteria that are binding for all member states of the EU fall under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to a much greater extent than under the Ministry of Defense. Therefore it should be no obstacle to consider putting the arms export licensing authority under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well.

Hautala would like to see the EU set up a joint and independent body to monitor the EU's Common Position on arms exports. She believes that different member states' interpretations of the criteria in the Common Position and the reporting thereof needs to be unified.

As of today, the export regulations set up by the EU are legally binding for all member states, but in reality the control of individual member states' export licensing is very limited.