

## **Resolution: Review of the EU Common Position on Arms Exports**

*Adopted at the YEPP Seminar in Tirana, Albania on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2013*

### **Recognizing:**

- That during the Arab spring, EU manufactured weapons of different kinds were used when government forces and civilians clashed.
- That after the fall of the Gaddafi regime, EU manufactured weapons were distributed to armed groups and terrorist organisations, leading to instability and rebellion in other regions, such as the Sahel-region.
- That using EU manufactured weapons against civilians endangers the peaceful policy intentions of Member states, whilst at the same time bans on certain countries for EU weapon deliveries are often bypassed by using transit countries where no bans apply, and who then export the EU manufactured weapons to blacklisted countries. Therefore, the current EU Common Position on Arms Exports has not been able to fulfil its objectives of the promotion of human rights, international responsibility, regional stability and economic support.
- That member states still use different national criteria to grant a licence for weapon exports to certain countries and that certain stakeholders campaign to weaken the current standards and blacklists.
- That international defence companies increasingly apply for an export license in a European country that is more flexible on its arms export criteria.
- That governments and arms producers relaxed their export policies in the years leading up to the Arab Spring.
- That the European defence industry is becoming more and more international and that certain parts of a weapon system manufactured in one Member State, could possibly end up in a blacklisted country.
- That the recent directive on *Intra Community Trade* (ICT) reinforces this evolution.
- That this evolution *de facto* weakens the arms export policy of countries that produce mostly weapon system parts or dual use goods.
- That the EU common position on arms exports is currently being reviewed.

### **Acknowledging:**

- That the EU is at its core a peace project aimed at Europe and the larger world.
- The treaty of the EU's preamble stressing its aims for peace
- That responsibility and the urge for a peaceful world are at the core of Christian democratic values. Our actions have consequences for other people and regions and we should not dismiss the potential consequences of our weapon export policies.
- That the defence industry remains an important industry and employer in the European Union and that R&D in the field of Defence has important spill-overs to civilian applications, underlines its economic importance
- That because of cuts to the defence budgets in EU Member States, and the shift to a global economy, the defence industry is more and more dependent on exports.
- That the EU has the ambition to develop a more harmonised foreign policy and that arms exports have, apart from a commercial interest, also an important effect on foreign policy.
- That several member states have announced to review their national arms export license procedures and that the European Parliament has called for stricter arms export standards.
- That trust in the arms export policies of other member states is essential to make the ICT directive work.

#### **YEPP calls on:**

- The member states and the Council Working Group on Conventional Arms Exports (COARM) to improve the reporting on arms exports to ensure public accountability and parliamentary scrutiny on arms exports. Statistics on European arms exports should be more transparent and be reported more regularly.
- The Member States to commit to a strict and uniform interpretation of the Common Position on Arms Exports.
- The Member States to take long-term effects into consideration when granting an export licence.
- The Member States to include a reference to CFSP and the European Security Strategy in the Common Position as the ninth criterion, insuring that the goals of the Common Position are in accordance with the goals of the broader EU external policies.
- The Member States to draft a list of 'sensitive countries', to which member states should be more restrained in granting arms export

licences. This list should include countries which had been recently subjected to an arms embargo or that are suspected to violate human rights.

- That the EEAS is involved in arms exports to these 'sensitive' countries by giving an opinion on the opportunity and desirability of the export licence on an ad hoc basis.
- The Member States revise the rules and legislation of the single market concerning the defence industry and arms exports, also in order to combat misuses by third country exports.
- The EU member states should use pooling by demand in the arms export industry.