



Department for International Trade

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Dear Mark,

Thank you for your email of 4th July to the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP, former Secretary of State for International Trade, enclosing an example of correspondence from your constituents about arms exports to Saudi Arabia. I am replying as the Minister responsible for export control.

The UK Government takes its export control responsibilities very seriously. Each export licence application is rigorously assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. A licence will not be granted if to do so would be inconsistent with these Criteria.

The Court of Appeal judgment is about how decisions were made in relation to one element of one of these Criteria; that is, Criterion 2c which relates to international humanitarian law (IHL). It is not about whether decisions to grant export licences were right or wrong but whether the decision-making process was rational. Although the decision-making process was found to be deficient in one respect, the judgment also acknowledged that the analysis used to make licensing decisions was rigorous and robust.

The Government disagrees with the judgment in relation to decision-making under Criterion 2c and has been granted permission to appeal. While we consider the implications of the judgment for decision-making, we will not grant any new licences for exports to Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners-UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain and Egypt-which might be used in the conflict in Yemen.

Given that we do not agree with the judgment, and the matter is still subject to legal proceedings, it would not be appropriate to hold a public inquiry into this matter.

Regarding the war in Yemen, the Government agrees that a political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and to address the worsening humanitarian crisis. The Yemeni parties must engage constructively and in good faith to overcome obstacles and find a political solution to end the conflict. The UK has played a leading role in diplomatic efforts, including bringing together key international actors to try to find a peaceful solution. The former Foreign Secretary, the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, visited the region on 1st - 4th March 2019 in a display of the UK's support for efforts to secure peace. His visit to Aden on 3rd March was the first visit to Yemen by a Western foreign minister since the start of the

conflict in 2015. In addition, the UK hosted a meeting of the Yemen Quad on 22nd June, where representatives of the UK, US, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates reiterated their support for UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths.

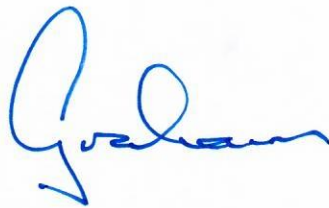
The UK calls on all parties to the conflict in Yemen to exercise restraint, comply fully with International Humanitarian Law and implement the Stockholm Agreements without delay to improve the humanitarian situation.

Regarding our ongoing relationship, Saudi Arabia is an important trading partner for the UK. In 2018 total trade in goods and services between our countries was £9.8bn. Saudi Arabia and the UK are also significant commercial investors in each other.

The UK is a strong supporter of Vision 2030 and Saudi Arabia's programme for economic diversity and social reform. We will work together on a range of fields including evaluating mutual investment opportunities in and through the UK using the Public Investment Fund, bilateral trade, and public procurement with UK companies in Vision 2030 priority areas, including on: education, training and skills; financial and investment services; culture and entertainment; healthcare services and life sciences; technology and renewable energy; and the defence industry.

I hope this assist you in replying to your constituent

Yours ever,



GRAHAM STUART MP

Minister for Investment

Department for International Trade