

Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

To the President of the
House of Representatives of the States General
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Our reference
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Subject Issuance of a license for the export of military equipment to Egypt via France

In accordance with the tightened arms export policy reported by letter on 10 June 2011 (Parliamentary Paper 2010-2011, 22 054, no. 165) and the motion by Member El Fassed et al. of 22 December 2011 on lowering the threshold value for accelerated parliamentary control in specific arms export applications to € 2,000,000 (Parliamentary Paper 2011-2012, 22 054, no. 181), your House will receive the information below about a license issued by the Netherlands worth € 34,050,000.00 for the export of military equipment via France to Egypt .

A Dutch company has recently obtained an export license for the export via France to Egypt of radar and C3 systems, and the associated system integration technology. In accordance with the selection criteria from the letter of 10 June 2011, the present export license will be notified to your Chamber at an accelerated pace.

The Dutch company's radar and C3 systems will be integrated into French corvettes. In June 2014, the Egyptian Navy signed a contract with the French company DCNS in Lorient for the delivery of four Gowind Combat Corvettes. The corvettes are labeled "Combat" because of the ability to place French Mica air-to-air missiles and Exocet anti-ship missiles on the deck. The ships will be built at the DCNS yard in Lorient and an Egyptian yard in Alexandria. The delivery of these French corvettes takes place as part of the modernization of the Egyptian fleet, which will contribute to maintaining or improving maritime security and coastal surveillance around Egypt.

The application has been assessed against the eight criteria of the EU Common Position on arms exports¹ . This review, the essence of which with regard to the most relevant criteria is set out below, led to the granting of the license on the basis of the following arguments:

• Human rights (criterion 2)

Serious human rights violations are taking place in Egypt. However, there are no indications that the goods to be exported are related to the

¹ GS 2008/944 of December 8, 2008

observed human rights violations or internal repression. In addition, the Egyptian Navy is not involved in human rights violations in Egypt.

• Internal conflicts (criterion 3)

The internal situation in Egypt is currently stable, but still fragile. In the longer term, the crackdown by the authorities could turn out to be destabilizing. Opposition, critics and NGOs are suppressed.

However, the risk that the supply of radar and C3 systems to the Egyptian navy contributes to internal repression is small. In particular, the security services and the police are held responsible for abuses and repression. In addition, it is unlikely that the goods in question will be used for internal repression, as the application is purely maritime. Therefore, the assessment against criterion 3 is positive.

• Regional stability (criterion 4)

Egypt plays an active regional role, often through political means. For example, Egypt is involved in the Middle East peace process (particularly in Gaza and intra-Palestinian reconciliation) and Egypt is trying to resolve the conflict with its neighbors over the construction of a dam in the Nile at the negotiating table. Egypt supports international action against the terrorist group ISIS in Iraq, but makes no military contribution itself.

An exception is the crisis in Libya. While Egyptian authorities deny any involvement, there are strong signs that Egypt has been involved in airstrikes on Libya through logistical support to the UAE. Egypt has also carried out retaliatory bombing of ISIS targets in Libya after the beheading of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians earlier this year. Egypt has also supported the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen and sent naval vessels to the Gulf of Aden because of the increased security risk.

Regional stability is highly volatile. However, the Egyptian navy has a legitimate security need, for example in countering terrorism in Sinai and guarding maritime areas and sea trade routes. The present transaction for the navy also contributes to the maritime security of Egypt and the region, which is partly in European interest. The Egyptian navy also plays an important role in combating the illegal smuggling of people and goods.

The Minister for Foreign Trade and
development cooperation,

The Minister of Foreign Affairs,

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