

Vince, don't sell arms to repressive regimes

Our voices are important

Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Vince Cable is responsible for the licensing of weapons exports and also the government agency that promotes arms exports (UKTI DSO). As constituents we are in a unique position to influence this key decision-maker.



Ne'ma's son, Essam Atta, was tortured to death in a military prison in Cairo in October 2011. The UK is still arming Egypt.

Gaddafi was a “priority market” for the Government

Just before he gunned down his own people, the UK sold him wall and door breaching projectile launchers, crowd control ammunition, small arms ammunition, and tear gas. To put this equipment in the hands of an unreliable dictator like Gaddafi, well known for torture, murder and oppression, shows either extreme naivety or cynically putting private profits at home before human rights abroad.

The UK is still arming repression

A year after the UK was condemned for its arms sales to authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa the UK is still supplying weapons to dictators. According to the Guardian, the Bahrain Government has killed and injured democracy protesters using British weapons. Despite this, UKTI DSO continues vigorously promoting weapons to repressive regimes including Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia is one of the most “authoritarian regimes” in the world. In 2011, its crackdown on dissents intensified and its British made

armoured vehicles were deployed to help suppress protests in Bahrain, but UK arms sales to the kingdom never even slowed.

The arms trade gets more support than any other industry

The Defence & Security Organisation (DSO) – within Vince Cable's Department - has 180 staff dedicated to arms sales. This compares with just 142 staff for all non-arms sectors. 56% of staff resources are committed to arms sales despite arms being only 1.2% of total exports. The taxpayer subsidises arms exports by £700m

Developing countries' resources are diverted from health by UK arms sales

Through the DSO Britain vigorously promotes weapons sales to developing countries. Several developing countries are priority markets including Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil and India. The massive 1998 South African arms deals for aircraft, helicopters, warships and submarines will cost the country over £8 billion. At the same time five and a half million South Africans living with HIV and AIDS were told the country couldn't afford anti-retroviral medication.

We are calling on Vince Cable to:

- ***Stop arming repressive regimes. It's time to end government support for the arms trade and close the DSEI arms fair.***
- ***Substantially restrict arms sales to countries where this will divert resources from development and exacerbate poverty.***

TRAKNAT - www.traknat.org.uk

(Twickenham, Richmond and Kingston Network Against the Arms Trade)

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TRAKNAT is supported by Kingston Peace Council, Richmond & Twickenham Green Party, Richmond & Twickenham Amnesty Group, Richmond & Twickenham Friends of the Earth, Richmond & Kingston World Development Group, Richmond & Kingston Greenpeace, Richmond & Kingston Palestine Solidarity Campaign.