

Under current export control policy guidelines, Canada closely controls the export of military goods and technology to countries, which:

- a) pose a threat to Canada and its allies;
- b) are involved in or under imminent threat of hostilities;
- c) are under United Nations Security Council sanctions; and
- d) have governments that have a persistent record of serious violations of the human rights of their citizens, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable risk that the goods might be used against the civilian population.

With the exception of exports to the United States, permits are required for the export of military goods and technology to all destinations. The approval of the Minister of Foreign Affairs is required for the export of all offensive military goods and technology, unless they are destined to a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally or to a small group of specified like-minded countries. In the case of non-offensive military goods and technology, the Minister is also consulted, if any of the above-mentioned conditions apply. Before the Minister's approval is sought, extensive consultations are held among human rights, military and industry experts at DFAIT, with the Department of National Defence, with Industry Canada, and, where appropriate, with other government departments and agencies. These consultations involve reviewing the latest information and best policy advice on Canada's defence and industrial relations with the recipient country, regional peace and stability, including civil conflict, and the human rights situation, including trends (i.e. are there signs of improvement or is the situation deteriorating?).

In considering export permit applications, careful attention is paid to a number of considerations. For example, in June 1996, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, instructed the Department to:

- do more rigorous analyses of security issues and threats of hostilities, fully considering: regional stability and security relationships; relations between neighbouring states; and internal conflicts such as civil wars;
- give a stricter interpretation of the human rights criteria, including increased requirements for end-use assurances to minimize the risk that Canadian equipment would fall into the hands of those that might use it to abuse human rights; and
- apply even stricter controls where firearms are concerned, including examining the gun control-laws and practices in recipient countries to satisfy ourselves that Canadian firearms would not slip into the illegal arms trade, or fuel local lawlessness or violence.