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Ministry of Defence

LUKE POLLARD MP
Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry

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28 November 2025

Dear Matt,

Thank you for your letter of 31 October 2025, with additional questions regarding UK export licences for Israel following my appearance at the Economic Security, Arms and Export Control Sub-Committee Oral evidence session on 15 September. You also ask about UK imports to Israel which were the subject of a recent Channel 4 report.

The UK's robust export licensing criteria states that the Government will not issue export licences if there is *a clear risk* that the items might be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Export licensing decisions are made on a case-by-case basis against this and the other Strategic Export Licensing Criteria. In our letter to the Committee on 5 November we set out the wide range of controlled exports which have been stopped under this approach. The actions we have taken to suspend export licences have been informed by thorough assessments and are consistent with all our obligations under international law. More detail on this, including our position on the Arms Trade Treaty, the Genocide Convention and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry's conference room paper is set out in our correspondence with the Committee.

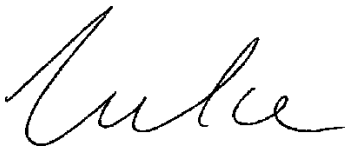
As you know, export licences cover a wide range of items. Ahead of the meeting on 15 September, the Government released a significant amount of information on Israel export licensing decisions (Export control licensing management information for Israel - GOV.UK). As the data shows, more than half of licences for Israel are for civilian or commercial use, covering a wide range of goods such as body armour for journalists and NGOs, cameras, food testing chemicals, and for medical research. You accurately raise that £128m of export licences for military equipment were approved in standard individual export licences in Q4 of 2024. Most military licences do not go to the Israeli authorities. The majority are for components which go to Israeli companies before being re-exported to third countries. For instance, £120m of this figure related to components to support exports of military items from Israel to a single programme for a NATO ally.

The Channel 4 report, like all similar reporting based on Israeli customs or tax data, makes no distinction between exports for military or civilian use, or those intended for re-export. As such, it significantly misrepresents the facts of our export licensing decisions, which we have published in detail. We categorically do not export any bombs or ammunition for use in operations in Gaza or the West Bank.

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I trust that this explains the position.

Yours sincerely,



LUKE POLLARD MP