Matt Western MP
Warwick & Leamington

Rt Hon Luke Pollard MP
Minister for Defence Readiness and Industry
Ministry of Defence

Sent via email.

31 October 2025

Dear Minister,

Further to the evidence you gave to the Economic Security, Arms and Export Control Committee on 15th September 2025, I am writing to ask if you could provide specific information in relation to a couple of the questions I put to you.

Additionally, Channel 4 have reported that the value of UK arms imported by Israel has reached a record high value in 2025 – with Israel having imported nearly £1million worth of munitions in the first nine months.

In June 2025, Israel imported over £400,000 worth of arms from the UK – the highest monthly amount since records began in January 2022. Can you please explain why the value of the imports has risen so dramatically and demonstrate that under no circumstances could those exports be used in the awful attacks on Gaza and the West Bank.

In the meeting, I raised the matter of UK approved licences for £128 million-worth of military equipment to Israel in single-use licences between October and December 2024, which is larger than for the whole of the period from 2020 to 2023, a three or four-year period.

In that session, you responded that there may be some confusion over whether these licences were for military use or dual-use, but the data is clear that the specific £128 million approved during that time period relates to licences issued for military listed items, and not dual-use goods (as these are recorded separately in the figures) – can you firstly confirm that is the case?

Secondly, the Minister for the Middle East specified that half the licences were for re-export to a third country, which appears true, but that leaves licenses valuing £60.02 million approved in the same ML5 category for Israel itself, which includes military goods relating to fire control systems, target acquisition, designation, range-finding, surveillance or tracking systems as well as countermeasures for these systems.

Can you please provide more specific details about the exact nature of this equipment and its stated end-use and end-user, both for equipment licensed for incorporation and re-export, as well as licences issued for use in Israel. This missing information is critical to understand the context behind granting these licences and for us to provide the necessary scrutiny of the Government's arms and strategic export control policy.

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I would also like to request more information on how the government assesses whether the transfer of military items could "facilitate" the commission of violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). I ask this because while international law (the ATT) and domestic policy (the SELC), requires the UK to prevent transfers where there is a clear risk that such equipment might be used to commit or *facilitate* a serious violation, it is not clear how the UK defines "facilitate".

Can you also provide more information on how the government defines and assesses the risk of facilitation, as required by the SELC?

Finally, on the issue of the UK's assessment of the risk of genocide, the Minister for the Middle East recognised during the session that were the UK to recognise the risk of genocide in Gaza, the government "would review everything very carefully at that point". Has the UK government given due consideration to the very significant UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Palestine's (the COI) 16 September finding that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza? Will this finding by an independent body influence the UK's assessment of the risk of genocide having been conducted in Gaza and its licensing decisions?

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

Matt

Matt Western
MP for Warwick and Leamington