

All arms exports should be subject to rigorous and transparent assessment and I know that organisations such as Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) have expressed concern about UK arms exports to Israel, particularly following the hostilities in Gaza in 2014. I believe it is important to ensure our arms exports system has proper accountability and transparency, and is being correctly exercised, including in respect of human rights. All export licence applications are considered on a case-by-case basis through the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. These criteria cover a range of considerations, including the potential for serious violation of international humanitarian law. States have the right to acquire the means to defend themselves, and the Government has a clear responsibility to ensure that arms are only sold for defensive purposes.