

UK interpretation of the arms embargo against China

In response to a Parliamentary Question asked in 1995, the UK government gave a clarification of its interpretation of the arms embargo against China:

"Since 7 June 1995 the United Kingdom has enforced an embargo on the sale to China of 'weapons, and equipment which could be used for internal repression'. The EU introduced a ban on arms sales to China on 26 June 1989 but the scope of that ban has, in the absence of agreement on a common interpretation, been left for national interpretation. In the interests of clarity we have decided that hence forward the embargo will include:

- lethal weapons such as machine guns, large calibre weapons, bombs, torpedoes, rockets and missiles;
- specially designed components of the above, and ammunition;
- military aircraft and helicopters, vessels of war, armoured fighting vehicles and other such weapons platforms;
- any equipment which is likely to be used for internal repression.

All applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis in the light of these criteria as well as our usual criteria governing all defence exports."