



## **SWEDISH PEACE AND ARBITRATION SOCIETY**

### **Country report from SPAS on the Swedish arms trade**

To the ENAAT-meeting in Brno, Czech Republic, June 2004. Covering the time since the meeting in Netherlands, June 2003 until now. By Rolf Lindahl.

#### **War on Iraq**

As I wrote in the previous report the Swedish arms export to USA and UK during the Iraq war was highly debated. Among other things it led to two complaints to the Constitutional committee. One of them as a consequence that it in September was revealed that the Swedish defence forces leased four sets of Artillery hunting radar (ARTHUR) to the British forces to be used during the war. UK was apparently in urgent need of these material and the deliverer, Ericsson Microwave Systems, had not been able to deliver them at that time. As usual, the complaints did however not lead to any critics of the government.

Since the war on Iraq, the Swedish government, authorities and parliamentary committees, are not frequently talking about the importance of a good relationship with strategic allies like UK and US. In the balance between our guide lines on arms export and a long term co operation with important countries "the interest of the nation must have priority" they say.

#### **Revision of arms regulations**

July 2003 the government appointed a special investigator to do a complete revision of the Swedish export control regulations and system as a whole. The instructions are very broad and several demands which SPAS earlier have put forward are included. Although one starting-point is the preservation of the Swedish traditionally restrictive system we are in SPAS deeply concerned that the outcome may lead to a liberalisation of the regulations which then will match the liberalisation in practice which we have seen lately.

Although the revision is broad it has an industrial perspective. Therefore we did one year before the revision shall be delivered to the government (October 2003) announce our own shadow investigation. SPAS investigation will focus on the need for a more restrictive policy than today. At the time of the launch of this we started a petition which demands that arms exports do not compromise with the four values peace, democracy, human rights and development. We are now in the middle of a campaign promoting these ideas.

One event was a seminar in the parliament where the guide lines of tomorrow were elaborated. On the seminar, the minister, authority and parliamentarians gave presentations besides ngo's like Amnesty, the Democracy Academy (Demokratiakademin) and the development organisation Diakonia.

We also had a certain campaign day against arms exports on 10-15 cities over the country with speeches, concerts and different types of demonstrations.

### **Development criteria**

Besides from what is written in the EU code, Sweden has earlier not taken any specific development aspects when granting licenses. After a successful campaign by Diakonia, SPAS and others the government got run over by the parliament which stated that Swedish arms exports should not hinder sustainable development in the recipient country. These issues are now included in the governmental revision of the regulations.

### **China embargo**

SPAS has followed and initiated the debate about the revision of the arms embargo towards China. The liberals (opposition) have been really front lined in this issue and accused the government of making the ground for the release of the embargo. SPAS applauded that and sent post cards with greetings to the liberal leader and critics to the prime minister, who did not oppose that the revision should take place.

### **Arms imports from Belarus**

Recently we had an op-ed article in the main Swedish newspaper revealing that Sweden since 1996 has a large military co-operation with Belarus. SPAS has earlier been pushing (op-ed article on Swedish military cooperation with Israel) for regulations and transparency when it comes to arms import, something that does not exist today. We can now show that Sweden imports weapons (laser sights) for more money than we give in development (democracy) aid to Belarus. Aggravating circumstances is also that the money which Belarus gets from arms sales goes directly to a secret fund outside of the state budget. Something dictator Lukasjenko refuses to talk about.

### **Arms exports 2003 - Conclusions**

During 2003 the value of deliveries reached "all time high" (current prices), comparable with the record years of late 80's when the big deal with India peaked the statistics. Sweden exported for 6,5 billions Swedish crowns (some 383 M €) which is a rise of 88% compared with the export 2002.

The latest years a considerable rise of the number of recipients are to be noted. With reaching 57, the number of recipients has never been as high as now. There has been a gradual rise the latest years.

Looking at the recipients we can notice that several countries where severe crimes against human rights are committed receive Swedish arms. Countries like Bahrain, Malaysia, Tunisia and Pakistan. That is the case although the criteria on human rights is one of the main in the Swedish arms regulations.

Sweden also sold arms/granted licenses to countries where civil war occur like Peru, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Russia and Turkey.

The export were also doubled to dictators compared to 2002 and among the recipients are United Arab Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia.

Finally, 16% of the Swedish arms export during 2003 was granted to poorer countries (low income and lower middle economies according to the World Bank).

## Some statistics

### Government figures of some of the recipients (Millions of Swedish crowns):

	<b>2001 Total</b>	<b>2002 Total</b>	<b>2003 Total</b>	<b>2001-2003 Position</b>
Schweiz	64,2	361,1	1 412	1
USA	433,2	460,8	624,9	2
France	86,9	479,3	617,1	3
Singapore	176,2	419,8	342,2	4
Germany	235,7	217,6	441,4	5
South Africa	0,6	358,3	475,5	6
Norway	357,3	167,8	156,2	7
United Kingdom	98,9	68,3	426,9	8
Mexico	55,0	256,3	240,8	9
Denmark	334,8	87,5	75,8	10
India	126,1	6,6	306,3	11
Thailand	1,9	23,3	246,8	15
Brazil	221,0	39,2	5,2	16
Malaysia	136,1	27,3	7,5	17
Venezuela	41,0	-	66	20
United Arab Emirates	0,9	25,1	67,3	22
Pakistan	15,6	1,3	20	27
Bahrain	24,6	0,2	4	30
Vietnam	-	12,1	-	36
Indonesia	2,3	0,9	3,9	38
<b>All countries</b>	<b>3 060</b>	<b>3 440</b>	<b>6 478</b>	