

Country Report the Netherlands

April 2007 -June 2008

Wendela de Vries

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Business as usual

Again the Netherlands has been ranked 5th by SIPRI in the biggest arms exporters list, due to the order of 4 Schelde shipyard marine corvettes to Indonesia. Mr. Damen, owner of this very successful family firm, managed in early 2008 to get an order for 3 frigates for Morocco as well, again with export credit insurance from Atradius, the Dutch Export Credit Agency, and with credit from ING and RABO-bank (who also financed the Indonesia order) and French Société Générale. No export license has been given yet.

Pension Funds

Due to public uproar after a television broadcast last year, many pension funds have developed a more ethical standard for their investments and exclude or plan to exclude industries which produce landmines and/or cluster munitions. However, many others (notably Shell pension fund) have done nothing, and none has excluded all military industry. Last May we published an analysis of developments and improvements over the last year.

Campagne tegen Wapenhandel calls for an exclusion of :

- companies that produce (components of) landmines, cluster munitions, and/or nuclear arms.
- companies that have more than 5% military production.

We make regular updates of our online *pensioenwijzer* (Dutch for pension guide) on which people can look up their own pension fund. It gives an overview of Dutch Pension Funds, the military companies in their portfolio's, and the products, exports and usages.

Court cases

In May 2007 Frans van Anraat was convicted by the appeals court to 17 years of imprisonment for complicity to war crimes. During the 1980s he exported chemicals to Saddam Hussein. Campagne tegen Wapenhandel contributed to the fact finding for this case. We also hope for an investigation and legal steps against others involved, e.g. the companies Melchemie and KBS and responsible politicians. The Netherlands has supplied almost half of all chemicals for Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons programme.

In March 2008 Charles Taylor associate Guus Kouwenhoven, timber trader and alleged arms dealer in Liberia, was cleared from charges in an appeals court, due to sloppy juridical evidence.[nee; Weski verdedigde Kouwenhoven; Zegveld stond Global Witness bij als betrokkene)

Research/publications

Together with TNI we published a report on Henk Slebos, Dutch long-time friend and business partner of A.Q.Khan (in English).

Also we published a report on arms trade and military transfers to Israel, because about 25% of the major arms transfers through the Netherlands are from the US to Israel, although the Netherlands itself hardly allows for any export licences for Israel. With English summary and a foreword from a Jewish organisation in the Netherlands.

For IKV Pax Christi we wrote a critical report in February on the Dutch government's position on cluster munitions (published in Dutch and English) to push their (then) undermining stance in the Treaty negotiations. Last week in Dublin they eventually followed the UK's breakthrough shift in position and now

will abandon all cluster munitions in their arsenal.

We launched a website on the Joint Strike Fighter, in which the Netherlands is participating as level 2 partner in the development. We had a lot of input in the political debate on the finances of this project. Our position is that the Netherlands are not participating in the JSF because the plane makes any sense for Dutch military activities, but because it is supposed to be a boost for the Dutch military industry and felt as a necessity to keep up good political-military relations with the U.S.

We wrote a fact sheet on Dutch second hand exports, making the state the most important arms exporter in the Netherlands. The state even lifted its own export ban on Israel to export second hand Hawk air defence parts to Israel, although this gave so much uproar in parliament that they will think twice next time.

On the Commission's new proposal for a licence-free internal market for military goods we wrote a short briefing note that made the issue a debate in Parliament, where it would not have been without it.

Finally we contributed to the Saferworld's 10 year CoC report and to the re-transfers paper that was decided upon after last November's EU NGO network meeting in Brussels. Also we wrote a number of case studies for Oxfam GB that were used for an expert paper for the ATT's GGE meeting in New York in May.

Activities

We participated in Halabja Memorial activities, 20 years after Saddam Hussein's chemical attack on this Kurdish village. Frank went to Iraqi Kurdistan to participate in a conference.

We participated in several debates where the Dutch movie Dealing and Wheeling in Small Arms was shown.

We participated in a criminological seminar on illegal trade in small arms, which surprisingly led to seven newspaper articles about the Netherlands being the world's 5th (legal) arms exporter.

Table: Dutch arms export licenses in euro million (1997-2006)

Land	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Totaal
Verenigde Staten	102,42	82,45	54,14	94,75	166,13	132,58	237,21	75,35	92,71	63,54	1.101,28
Duitsland	74,15	56,54	80,86	82,5	49,55	75,35	84,29	88,19	383,89	76,12	1051,44
Griekenland	41,7	4,86	8,35	12,39	162,45	46,78	431,66	161,43	3,26	4,11	876,99
Chili	0,09	56,27	1,68	0,18	10,8	0,51	0,52	0,55	295,62	98,46	464,68
Korea (Zuid)	78,64	4,27	2,86	66,66	34,35	7,96	99,93	114,97	9,75	3,88	423,27
VAE	368,88	7,26	0,23	0,82	1,41	3,39	0,25	0,44	0,31	1,93	384,92
Indonesië	3,45	4,36	36,98	2,77	0,32	0,96	5,02	1,22	13,46	278,19	346,73
Turkije	79,87	61,17	17,43	4,58	6,67	21,83	75,42	3,5	12,42	43,7	326,59
Venezuela	19,74	0,91	1,41		1,77			27,62	7,67	196,42	255,54
Diverse NAVO-landen en EU+*	15,84	17,74	55,27	30,95	9,16	19,12	1,69	19,83	42,5	41,75	253,85