

Omega Research Foundation Response to OHCHR Questionnaire to Inform the Report on the impact of Arms Transfers on Human Rights.

# 1) Please identify the ways that arms transfers impact on the enjoyment of human rights. Are there rights that are particularly affected? Are there groups of rights-holders which are particularly affected?

The Omega Research Foundation, a UK registered charity in consultative status with UN ECOSOC, and with over 20 years' experience researching international arms transfers <sup>1</sup>, thanks the OHCHR for the opportunity to answer this questionnaire and to contribute to discussions on the impact of arms transfers on human rights. The purpose of this submission is to make the case for a comprehensive definition of 'arms transfers' - one which not only encompasses conventional arms, but also includes all military, security and police weaponry, munitions, armaments, related material and associated components that poses a clear risk of being used to commit or facilitate serious violations of human rights or of being used for internal repression.

We submit that a comprehensive definition of 'arms' should include police as well as military weapons. This would include, not only police small arms that fire lethal ammunition but also, for example, riot launchers and ammunition of all kinds, including 'tear gas' grenades and cartridge launched projectiles, kinetic impact projectiles (such as rubber coated steel bullets, plastic baton rounds and solid rubber baton rounds), projectile electrical weapons, (such as 'Taser' weapons made by American company Taser International), directed energy weapons (such as acoustic weapons, millimetre wave weapons and laser dazzlers), shotgun fired birdshot and buckshot, and water cannon and other riot control type vehicles – technologies often referred to as 'less-lethal' but which can impact human rights, including the right to life, in various ways. Whilst these less lethal technologies might appear a diverse group, they all act in various ways to direct energy or matter to one or more targets, with a range of intended and unintended outcomes<sup>2</sup>.

Whilst the technical and physical difference between weapons and equipment intended for use by military or police can be small or non-existent, they are often treated in very different ways in the export control process, with equipment designated as military controlled and that designated as police equipment not controlled. The UN Register of Conventional arms, export control regimes such as the international Arms Trade Treaty or the Wassenaar Arrangement and most national export control lists do not list or control a wide variety of arms and equipment, particularly those utilised in law enforcement operations that can impact on the enjoyment of human rights.

However such technologies are widely used in operations that often disproportionately affect the marginalised of society, including refugees, migrants or indigenous peoples, who are the very people often fighting for the full enjoyment of their human rights. Their impact on various rights is detailed below.

<sup>1</sup> More information about the Omega Research Foundation (Omega) and the work we do is available at

https://omegaresearchfoundation.org/

Working with Amnesty International we have continually made the argument that that arms transfers should also be interpreted so as to cover military and security vehicles and aircraft, small arms used by both the police and military, communications equipment and software technology (please see Amnesty International (2011) Arms for International Security: Will they be covered by an Arms Trade Treaty?) - but, due to space limitations, this submission will focus on 'less lethal' technologies.

#### The right to life.

Whilst the right to life is often associated with the use of lethal force and firearms, the 'less-lethal technologies detailed above can also result in death or serious injury which, under certain circumstances, may constitute a violation of the right to life. Less lethal weapons are designed to have a lower risk of causing death or serious life threatening injury. However, they are frequently used in very large numbers or quantities, or are inherently indiscriminate, which can result in a death rate than is unacceptably high.

For example, riot control agents (tear gas and pepper spray) can cause death by asphyxiation or chemical poisoning if used in high doses or where persons cannot escape their effects, or particularly if they hit individuals in the head, or if they are fired directly at persons. Evidence from countries including Bahrain indicates that such projectiles can strike people in the head, potentially with fatal consequences <sup>3</sup>. Kinetic impact projectiles can also result in loss of life. In the USA, an independent inquiry found that a young woman, Victoria Snelgrove 'died after being struck by a less-lethal projectile fired by a Boston police officer'. <sup>4</sup> In the Palestinian Occupied Territories rubber coated steel bullets have resulted in 'dozens of deaths' <sup>5</sup>. A recent study into projectile electric-shock weapons found '16 probable cases of fatal brain injuries induced by electronic control from electrical weapons', with the authors concluding that 'the use of electronic control presents a small but real risk of death from fatal traumatic brain injury' <sup>6</sup>.

The right to freedom from torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

The equipment detailed above can also be used to commit torture and / or ill-treatment. In 2004, the then UN Special Rapporteur on Torture noted, in his report to the UN Commission on Human Rights, that the 'vast majority' of cases received by his office have 'involved the misuse of those instruments, legitimate in appropriate circumstances, to inflict torture or other forms of ill-treatment' and mentioned, amongst other types of equipment, 'electro-shock stun weapons', 'kinetic impact devices' and 'chemical control substances...such as tear gas' <sup>7</sup>.

A subsequent UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan Mendez, has also highlighted the issue of excessive use of force by law enforcement officials during policing of assemblies, noting that 'excessive use of force is prohibited under international law and... law enforcement officials, in carrying out their duties, are to apply non-violent means before resorting to the use of force and firearms. Depending on the seriousness of the pain and suffering inflicted, excessive use of force

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) *Weapons Under International Human Rights Law*, Cambridge University Press, citing the case of Sayyed Hashem Saeed, who was killed when a projectile hit him at close range during the security forces' response to a protest in Bahrain on 31 December 2011. See also Physicians for Human Rights (2012) *Weaponising Tear Gas: Bahrain's Unprecedented Use of Toxic Chemical Agents Against Civilians*. Available online at <a href="https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR">https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR</a> Reports/Bahrain-TearGas-Aug2012-small.pdf (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Stern, D; Downs, R; Gittens, R; Howe, W; Ijames, S; King, P; Stone, E (2005) *Commission Investigating the Death of Victoria Snelgrove.* Available online at <a href="https://www.cityofboston.gov/images">www.cityofboston.gov/images</a> documents/sternreport tcm3-8954.pdf (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> B'Tselem (2017) *Rubber-coated steel bullets* – 'rubber bullets'. <a href="http://www.btselem.org/firearms/rubber-coated-bullets">http://www.btselem.org/firearms/rubber-coated-bullets</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Kroll, M.W.; Adamec, J; Wetli, C.V.; Williams, H. E. (2016) 'Fatal traumatic brain injury with electrical weapon falls' *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine* 43: 12 – 19. However, the article did not focus on whether these incidents were violations of the right to life, and the authors are careful 'not (to) suggest a viable control alternative for the officer at the time of the incident'.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (2004) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the question of torture, Theo Van Boven*, Commission on Human Rights, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2005/62, para. 14. Available online at <a href="https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/104/83/PDF/G0510483.pdf?OpenElement">https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/104/83/PDF/G0510483.pdf?OpenElement</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or even torture'<sup>8</sup>. Indeed in a case in the USA relating to the use of a projectile electric-shock weapon in the USA on an 'unarmed man' posing no 'immediate threat', the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit found that use of the weapon 'violated... (the individual's) constitutional right to be free from excessive force' <sup>9</sup>. The UN Committee Against Torture has commented more broadly on the risks associated with these weapons, expressing their concern that 'these weapons cause severe pain constituting a form of torture' <sup>10</sup>.

#### The right to Health.

Arms transfers can also impact the right to health—or, more specifically, the 'right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health' <sup>11</sup>--by the long term consequences and far-reaching repercussions that their use may have. For example, an academic study examining the use of laser weapons found that whilst 'none of the laser weapons are designed to be blinding, all could be a threat to vision when used improperly' <sup>12</sup>. Another study found that 'prolonged staring into such lasers could result in retinal injury at long ranges and, if subjects are exposed to the laser at short ranges, permanent injury, including blindness, could occur.' <sup>13</sup> Injuries including blinding have been reported by US personnel in Iraq following the introduction of green laser systems, but little or no data exists on the effects on the targets <sup>14</sup> or on the effects of repeated exposure.

Similarly, an academic study looking into the long term effects of tear gas—mainly CS and OC—on those who had been exposed repeatedly in the two years prior to the study found a marked increase of 'respiratory complaints including cough, phlegm, dyspnea, and chest tightness among subjects frequently exposed to tear gases compared to non-exposed subjects' hwhilst Physicians For Human Rights note that 'persistent targeting civilians in enclosed spaces may lead to serious long-term health consequences, including miscarriages and severe respiratory distress resulting in premature death' 16. Such examples indicate that arms transfers of less-lethal weapons can have broad, far-reaching—and sometimes irreversible—impacts on the right to health that can last well beyond the duration of incident in question.

## The Right to Protest.

It has been argued that there exists an umbrella 'right to protest', derived from the rights to

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (2013) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan E.Méndez Addendum Mission to Morocco* UN doc. A/HRC/22/53/Add.2. Available online at www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session22/A-HRC-22-53-Add-2 en.pdf (accessed 2nd

www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session22/A-HRC-22-53-Add-2 en.pdf (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit *Carl Bryan vs Brian McPherson* No 08-55622 D.C. No 3:06-CV-01487-LAB-CAB, Filed December 28, 2009. Available online at <a href="http://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2009/12/28/08-55622.pdf">http://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2009/12/28/08-55622.pdf</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> UN Committee Against Torture (2008) *Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee Against Torture: Portugal*, point 14. UN doc: CAT/C/PRT/CO/4. Available online at <a href="http://www.refworld.org/docid/4804a62e2.html">http://www.refworld.org/docid/4804a62e2.html</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> World Health Organisation and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (undated) *The Right to Health* Available online <a href="http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet31.pdf">http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Factsheet31.pdf</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Dartt, quoted in Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Dartt, quoted in Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) *Weapons Under International Human Rights Law*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Jackson and Hutchison, quoted in Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) *Weapons Under International Human Rights Law*, Cambridge Uni Press . <sup>14</sup> Svan and Druzen, quoted in Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) *Weapons Under International Human Rights Law*, Cambridge University Press .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Arbak, P; Bager, W; Kumbasar, O; Ulger, F; Kiliçaslan, Z; and Evyapan, F (2014) 'Long Term Effects of Tear Gases on Respiratory System: Analysis of 93 Cases' *The Scientific World Journal* 2014 edition

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Physicians for Human Rights (2012) Weaponising Tear Gas: Bahrain's Unprecedented Use of Toxic Chemical Agents Against Civilians. Available online at <a href="https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR">https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR</a> Reports/Bahrain-TearGas-Aug2012-small.pdf (accessed 2nd February 2017).

freedom of opinion, expression, assembly, and association, among others <sup>17</sup>. Whilst acknowledging the caveats that apply to these rights. Omega is concerned that arms transfers might impact on the ability and willingness of citizens to engage in peaceful protest. For example, a court case in Canada exploring the proposed methods to be used to police the 2010 G20 Summit centred on the use of the Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD), a device which has both a loudhailer function (to communicate with the crowd) and an 'alert' function which produces a high volume, high-pitched sound that can be used as a weapon. Organisations initiating court action over Toronto Police's proposed guidelines for use of the LRAD submitted that the mere possibility of the device being used has had a 'chilling' effect on the right to protest, both by dissuading people from attending, and also by limiting the ways in which attendees chose to protest <sup>18</sup>.

These concerns are exacerbated as the weapon is relatively indiscriminate. Although the manufacturers claim that these devices have 'directionality' (that is, they are capable of being targetable to a greater or lesser extent), an internal review of the weapon by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police found that 'while the manufacturer's claim that their LRAD has a very narrow band of audio directivity (+/- 15 degrees) independent field tests prove this to be false. Consequently ... higher sound pressures will be ... emitted towards unintended bystanders or personnel found within the directional periphery' <sup>19</sup>. Thus it becomes difficult to target specific individuals, and difficult to ensure that peaceful protestors and bystanders are not affected. Indeed, a Joint Report by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions on the proper management of assemblies noted that 'effective controls should be established at national and international levels prohibiting the trade in policing and crowd-control equipment, including surveillance technology, where a serious risk exists that they could, in the context of assemblies, facilitate unlawful killings, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or other human rights violations or abuses' <sup>20</sup>.

Topics 2) and 3) Are you aware of assessments by governments of the impact that arms transfers may have on the enjoyment of human rights. If possible, please specify what considerations are—and should be--taken into account when making these assessments, including national procedures and / or law and international obligations and standards. On what information and/or sources of information are these assessments by governments based?

Considerations taken into account.

Several governments and regional bodies have assessed the impact that arms transfers—and, in particular, transfers of less lethal projectiles—have on human rights. For example EC Regulation 1236/2005 (amended in 2014 and 2016) deals specifically with equipment that can be used for

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www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session31/Documents/A.HRC.31.66 E.docx (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) *Weapons Under International Human Rights Law*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Please see Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) *Weapons Under International Human Rights Law*, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Royal Canadian Mounted Police internal review, quoted in Casey-Maslen, Corney and Dymond (2014) 'Weapons design, acquisition, and transfer under human rights law' in Casey-Maslen, S (eds) Weapons Under International Human Rights Law, Cambridge University Press.
<sup>20</sup> The Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association the Special Rapporteur on

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (2016) Joint report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions on the proper management of assemblies UN doc A/HRC/31/66. Available at

torture and ill-treatment, introducing a prohibition on the import and export of goods with no use other than torture and ill-treatment, and putting in place a licensing / authorisation system for certain goods that could be used for torture and ill-treatment <sup>21</sup>.

The preamble to EC Regulation 1236/2005 notes various considerations that, following on from a European Parliament resolution, are taken into account when assessing the impact of particular weapons on human rights, and in particular when deciding whether to class particular weapons as 'goods which have no practical use other than for the purpose of capital punishment or for the purpose of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment', as 'goods that could be used for the purpose of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment' or as goods that fall into neither of these categories. Such considerations include whether: i) the weapon is 'inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading', ii) the extent of information about its effects, particularly concerns about 'police and security equipment the medical effects of which are not fully known' and iii) whether 'use in practice has revealed a substantial risk of abuse or unwarranted injury'. When deciding which less lethal weapons should be controlled, and in what fashion, the US BIS considers, amongst other aspects, whether a weapon is a 'specially designed implement of torture', as well as its 'potential to be used in abusing human rights' <sup>22</sup>.

Assessments of less lethal weapons by regional and international committees are also instructive here. For example, in their assessment of a particular type of electric shock technology, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) focused on the 'particularly high' scope 'for misuse' of these weapons and the 'inherently degrading' nature of the equipment in question' – as well as the availability of 'alternative means of ensuring security' <sup>23</sup>. In another example, the UN Committee Against Torture recommended that the use of stun belts be abolished given the nature and degree / likelihood of any risk posed by the weapon. In this case, they concluded that their use 'almost invariably led to breaches of article 16 of the Convention' (i.e. the prohibition of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) <sup>24</sup>. Hence, irrespective of any utility such weapons might have, both the nature of the risk they pose (in this case, the risk of causing cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) and the likelihood of this risk occurring (in this instance, the risk was considered to 'almost' always occur) led to Committee to recommend their prohibition.

Assessments on conventional arms also set out some established criteria. For example, the EU Common Position sets out a set of criteria against which proposed transfers should be evaluated. These include:

 Respect for the international obligations and commitments of Member States, in particular the sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council or the European Union, agreements on non-proliferation and other subjects, as well as other international obligations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Official Journal of the European Union (2005) Council Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 of 27 June 2005 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment Available online at <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:200:0001:0019:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:200:0001:0019:EN:PDF</a>

<sup>(</sup>accessed 2nd February 2017).

22 Department of Commerce Bureau of Industry and Security (2010) Revisions to the Commerce Control List To Update and Clarify Crime Control License Requirements available online at

https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-07-15/html/2010-17338.htm (accessed 2nd Feburary 2017).

23 CPT, 20th General Report, p33 et sqq; see also Council of Europe (2010) Press release: 'Council of Europe anti-torture committee calls for strict regulation of electrical discharge weapons', 26 October 2010. Available at: http://www.cpt.coe.int/en/annual/press/2010-10-26-eng.htm (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>24</sup> UN Committee Against Torture (2000) Committee Against Torture Concludes 24<sup>th</sup> Session. Available online at <a href="http://www.un.org/press/en/2000/20000522.hr4472.doc.html">http://www.un.org/press/en/2000/20000522.hr4472.doc.html</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

- Respect for human rights in the country of final destination as well as respect by that country of international humanitarian law.
- Internal situation in the country of final destination, as a function of the existence of tensions or armed conflicts.
- Preservation of regional peace, security and stability.
- National security of the Member States and of territories whose external relations are the responsibility of a Member State, as well as that of friendly and allied countries.
- Behaviour of the buyer country with regard to the international community, as regards in particular its attitude to terrorism, the nature of its alliances and respect for international law.
- Existence of a risk that the military technology or equipment will be diverted within the buyer country or re-exported under undesirable conditions.
- Compatibility of the exports of the military technology or equipment with the technical and economic capacity of the recipient country, taking into account the desirability that states should meet their legitimate security and defence needs with the least diversion of human and economic resources for armaments <sup>25</sup>.

Synthesising the various considerations that different bodies apply when assessing potential arms transfers, we suggest that—in addition to the principles mentioned in the EU Common Position—the following should also be taken into consideration:

- How the weapon is used in practice.
- The scope / potential for potential misuse (irrespective of how it is actually used).
- The nature of the risks posed.
- The likelihood of risk occurring.
- How much is known about the weapon's medical effects.
- The weapon's technical features.

### Sources of information used.

Under EC Regulation 1236/2005, Section 6.2, sources of information that shall be taken into account when making assessments and taking decisions include: 'available international court judgements, findings of the competent bodies of the UN, the Council of Europe and the EU, and reports of the Council of Europe's European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment and Punishment and of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Other relevant information, including available national court judgements, reports or other information prepared by civil society organisations and information on restrictions on exports of goods listed in Annexes II and III applied by the country of destination, may be taken into account'. We submit that this is a useful guide to credible sources that could be useful when assessing arms transfers more broadly.

Topics 4) and 5) Are you aware of a refusal or refusals by a government to authorise a proposed arms transfer or arms transfers on the basis that the arms transfer would impact on the enjoyment of human rights? If possible, please specify the factors that were taken into consideration in making this decision, and the nature of the human rights that would have been impacted by the proposed transfer. Are you aware of a refusal or refusals by a government to authorise a proposed arms transfer on the grounds of the risk of diversion of the arms?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Official Journal of the European Union (2008) Acts adopted under Title V of the EU Treaty Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment Available online <a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:0103:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:335:0099:0103:EN:PDF</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

As noted above, EC Regulation 1236/2005 (amended in 2014 and updated in 2016) deals specifically with equipment that can be used for torture and ill-treatment. It requires EU member states to introduce a licensing system for certain goods that could be used for torture and ill-treatment. Several member states have used this licensing system to refuse authorisation of exports of particular equipment to particular countries. For example, the Czech Republic refused an export licence application for electric shock weapons to Azerbaijan and Iran due to the risk of their use for torture. The UK refused to authorise the export of less lethal equipment to the USA. Whilst the equipment was unspecified, the licensing category included electric-shock devices, chemical substance sprays and leg restraints <sup>26</sup>.

UK and European Union decisions on exports to Egypt, Belarus and Syria also provide evidence of a widening of the definition of 'arms' to include those outside of military lists. In the case of Egypt, in 2013 EU member states agreed to 'suspend export licenses to Egypt of any equipment which might be used for internal repression', thus potentially covering a wide range of equipment in addition to conventional arms – but gave no guidance about the types of equipment. Additional regulations and orders have provided more specificity about the kinds of equipment that could come under the category of 'equipment for internal repression', whilst establishing the principle that this should cover a broad range of potentially repressive equipment above and beyond conventional arms. For example, the EU's 2011 Regulation concerning exports to Belarus provided a list of equipment that might be used for internal repression, including 'firearms not controlled by... the Common Military List' 'ammunition specially designed for the firearms', 'vehicles equipped with a water cannon, specially designed or modified for the purpose of riot control' and 'razor barbed wire'. In the case of Syria, the UK similarly provided a list that went beyond conventional arms to include 'grenades not already covered by the military list' and 'vehicles specially designed or modified to remove barricades'.

These examples highlight steps that States are already taking to use a broader, inclusive definition of 'arms transfers' - one which allows them to regulate the export of a range of equipment - from electric shock devices to tear gas, water cannon to barbed wire - that pose a clear risk of being used in human rights violations and in other instances of internal repression, and to deny export licenses where necessary. We therefore argue that, given their human rights implications and the actions that many States have already taken to control their trade, it is necessary to define arms transfers in a way that goes beyond conventional arms to incorporate all military, security and police weapons and equipment, including less lethal weapons, that poses a clear risk of being used to commit or facilitate serious violations of human rights and/or internal repression.

For further information and follow up, please contact the Omega Research Foundation via email at  $\underline{abi@omegaresearchfoundation.org}$ , or at  $\underline{info@omegaresearchfoundation.org}$ , via telephone at +44 161 273 8875 or via our website, www.omegaresearchfoundation.org

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Amnesty International and the Omega Research Foundation (2010) From Words to Deeds: Making the EU Ban on the Trade in 'Tools of Torture' a Reality Available online at <a href="https://omegaresearchfoundation.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Publications/From%20words%20to%20deeds.pdf">https://omegaresearchfoundation.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Publications/From%20words%20to%20deeds.pdf</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>27</sup> The Council of the European Union (2013) Council conclusions on Egypt: Foreign Affairs Council Meeting Brussels. 21 August 2013. Accessed online at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/138599.pdf (accessed 2nd February 2017).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Council Regulation (EU) (2011) No 588/2011 of 20 June 2011 amending Regulation (EC) No 765/2006 concerning restrictive measures against President Lukashenko and certain officials of Belarus.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> HM Government (2013) *Export Control (Syria Sanctions) Order 2013*. Available online at <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/2012/schedule/2/made">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/2012/schedule/2/made</a> (accessed 2nd February 2017).