

Irresponsible Implementation of Arms Export Principles by Heckler & Koch

- Heckler & Koch continues to supply regions of conflict and human rights abusing regimes
- The arms manufacturer still carries the name of deadly Nazi-henchman Heckler & Koch
- Countermotions on the non-release of the board of directors and supervisory board
- Critical shareholders submit 103 questions concerning worrying company developments

Berlin/Köln, 30.08.2021. On the occasion of the Annual General Meeting of the Heckler & Koch AG on August 31st, 2021, the coalition of critical shareholders demands that the small arms maker finally credibly and consistently implements its "Green-Countries-Strategy". According to the strategy, the company was only going to export to democratic and non-corrupt countries such as the EU and NATO, as well as countries deemed NATO-equivalent. Yet, in practice, the company has been watering down this strategy. Thus, countries such as South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia or Oman are considered to be "Green Countries" and can thus be supplied.

"Instead of undermining the 'Green-Countries-Strategy' Heckler & Koch should consistently implement and expand the limitations," according to Charlotte Kehne, expert for export controls at "Living without Armaments" (Ohne Rüstung Leben) and speaker for the German Action Outcry Campaign to Stop the Arms Trade. Kehne thus reconfirmed a demand that had been made by an NGO-coalition in July directed at the Heckler & Koch board of directors. "The possibility of Heckler & Koch exports to warring countries, armed conflicts, into countries, where human rights are violated or where violations of end-use-certificates are known, must be prohibited immediately and without exception. This minimum-requirement must also apply to older contracts as well, independently from the question if the designated recipient is an EU, NATO, or third country!", Kehne said.

Ruth Rohde, board member at the Arms Information Centre (RIB e.V.) adds that, "even exports to countries, which Heckler & Koch calls 'green', are not as clean as the company wants to make us believe. In 2020 34% of Heckler & Koch turnover was generated in the United States, the same country in which 41,000 people were killed by gun violence in the same year. To continue expanding this business of death is irresponsible."

Jürgen Grässlin, chair of the Arms Information Centre, federal spokesperson of the DFG-VK and the Action Outcry Campaign to Stop the Arms Trade submitted two countermotions (see attachments) in the name of the critical shareholders. "Whoever is responsible for such a disastrous company policy with such fatal consequences, as the board of directors as well as the supervisory board of the H&K AG are, should not be discharged. In the past year the H&K leadership have massively undermined their own 'Green-Countries-Strategy' and forced through arms exports to regions of war and conflict. Many people have died by Heckler & Koch arms through the involvement of NATO-partner France in Mali, as well as through the USA, in their own country and during international military campaigns. To top it all off, Heckler & Koch still bears the name of the Nazi henchman and deadly arms manager Edmund Heckler in their company name – for how much longer?"

Additionally, at the company there is staffing turmoil on the supervisory board, the ownership structures are opaque, and the company is in massive debt. While the former majority share holder Andreas Heeschen attempts to sue his way into the supervisory board, the administration is trying to block this endeavour by re-submitting resolutions from the last AGM. The critical shareholders have submitted 103 questions on all of these issues to the virtual AGM.

The **Critical Shareholders Heckler & Koch** use their right to submit questions, to confront the board of directors and the supervisory board of the small arms producer with their criticism and ask questions on company policies.

Submitted Questions by the Critical Shareholders Heckler & Koch (in German):

<https://www.kritischeaktionaere.de/heckler-koch/aushoehlung-gruene-laender-strategie-verlorene-gerichtsverfahren-ruestungskonversion-und-personalquerelen-unsere-fragen-an-den-vorstand-von-heckler-koch/>

Counter motions by Jürgen Grässlin for the Critical Shareholders Heckler & Koch (multiple languages available):

<https://www.gn-stat.org/?p=3053>

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