
EU Parliament: plenary meeting in Brussels next week. Rules on arms exports; MEPs asking for greater transparency

The enforcement of and compliance with the EU's common rules on the export of military equipment: it is one of the issues that will be addressed next week at the plenary meeting of the European Parliament, which, after a lot of back and forth, has been arranged in Brussels instead of Strasbourg, as initially planned, since the French city is in grips of a relapse of Covid-19 infections. The agenda of the plenary meeting (14th to 17th September) will include the State of the Union Address from the president of the EU Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and a few discussions and rounds of votes on the response to the pandemic. But the issue of control over arms exports looks particularly prominent. "In the light of the rising production of weapons in the EU, the MEPs are ready to ask for stricter monitoring and greater transparency through a report that investigates the way the member states are complying with the common rules that have been agreed upon in 2008 about the export of military equipment and technology", the EU assembly explains in a notice. During next Monday's debate, the MEPs will probably place emphasis on the inconsistencies of the current practices. Common Position 2008/944/PESC is a set of legally binding rules with eight criteria that need to be considered when releasing an export licence. Among other things, such criteria include the respect of human rights in the country of final destination and should take priority over any national interest of an economic, social, commercial or industrial nature.

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