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Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

Space Policy, Copernicus and Defence
Defence, Aeronautic and Maritime Industries

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Mr Michał Łukowicz
michal@lukowicz.biz

Dear Mr Łukowicz,

Thank you for your letter of 23 November 2015.

As you refer to in your email, the European Commission proposed, on 18 November 2015, a revision of the Firearms Directive (Directive 91/477/EEC as amended by Directive 2008/51/EC).

This proposal is based on the conclusions of 3 studies the European Commission has recently conducted evaluating all provisions of the Firearms Directive¹.

The Commission presented a report on the implementation of the Directive on the basis of these studies to the European Parliament and Council on 18 November together with the proposed measures to the Firearms Directive to address the identified gaps.

This report notably indicates that over the last decade, 10 000 homicides have been committed in Europe with firearms. In certain Member States, a majority of homicides have been committed with legal firearms. Moreover, there are nearly half a million firearms inside the EU which have been registered as lost or stolen from the mid-90s up to 2014, and which remain accounted for. The report also highlights the risk of conversion of alarm weapons and the fact that certain semi-automatic firearms are particularly dangerous and can be transformed into automatic firearms.

The risk created by certain semi-automatic firearms has also been highlighted by all Member States in the context of the European Council of 18 December 2015.

Against this background, we need also to take into account the fact that several millions of EU citizens own and use firearms for hunting or sport shooting without creating any security problems.

All these elements need to be taken into consideration, and we only propose to focus on the main problems identified. These measures only aim at enhancing EU security of the

¹[http://www.siDri.org/research/security/europe/publications/study-on-firearms;](http://www.siDri.org/research/security/europe/publications/study-on-firearms)
[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-humantrafficking;](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-humantrafficking)
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/organized-crime-and-humantrafficking/general/docs/dg_home_-_illicit_firearms_trafficking_final_en.pdf
and <http://ec.europa.eu/DocsRoom/documents/8385?locale=en>

EU citizens and do by no means target law-abiding owners of legally possessed firearms as you state in your letter.

As regard more specifically the semi-automatic firearms, contrary to the information which has been circulated notably on internet, the Commission does not propose the prohibition of all semi-automatic firearms, but only a limited number of the most dangerous firearms: automatic firearms which have been converted into semi-automatic firearms (and which can be easily transformed into full automatic), and semi-automatic firearms for civilian use which resemble weapons with automatic mechanisms (example semi-automatic AK 47). All the other categories of semi-automatic firearms are not modified and can be acquired by private persons subject to normal authorisation.


The table below shows all the categories of semi-automatic firearms that private persons could acquire.

Category	B:	Proposal concerning semi-automatic firearms (these firearms could be acquired by private persons subject to authorisation)
1.		Semi-automatic or repeating short firearms.
2.		Single-shot short firearms with centre-fire percussion.
3.		Single-shot short firearms with rim fire percussion whose overall length is less than 28 cm.
4.		Semi-automatic long firearms whose magazine and chamber can together hold more than three rounds.
5.		Semi-automatic long firearms whose magazine and chamber cannot together hold more than three rounds, where the loading device is removable or where it is not certain that the weapon cannot be converted, with ordinary tools, into a weapon whose magazine and chamber can together hold more than three rounds.
6.		Repeating and semi-automatic long firearms with smooth-bore barrels not exceeding 60 cm in length.

Finally allow me to reassure you that we share your concern that emphasis should be put illegal firearms possession and trafficking and reinforcing external controls. I could not agree more with you that the proposed measures alone on possession and acquisition of weapons by civilians, cannot possibly address today's security challenges in a comprehensive manner.

To this effect, the Commission also announced on 2 December an action plan against the illegal trafficking of weapons and explosives².

Yours sincerely,



Alain ALEXIS

² http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-15-6219_en.htm