

Press Release
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„Action Outcry – Stop the Arms Trade!“ submits another criminal complaint against SIG Sauer for illegal arms exports – to Mexico, Colombia and Nicaragua
The prosecution in Kiel investigates.

On April 30, 2020, the campaign "Action Outcry – Stop the Arms Trade!", represented by its lawyer Holger Rothbauer, once again filed a criminal complaint against the arms manufacturer SIG Sauer - this time for illegal arms deliveries to Mexico, Nicaragua, and, again, to Colombia. There is suspicion of a violation of the German War Weapons Control Act as well as repeated violations of the Foreign Trade and Payments Act.

Already in 2014, "Action Outcry - Stop the Arms Trade!" - an alliance of well over a hundred organizations - had filed a complaint against those responsible at SIG Sauer for the illegal export of 38,000 pistols to Colombia. In 2019, the ensuing investigations and the trial before the Kiel regional court led to the sentencing of three high-ranking managers of the company to suspended sentences and fines. In addition, SIG Sauer's entire proceeds of around 11 million Euros resulting from the illegal transactions are to be recovered, against which the company has appealed to the Federal Supreme Court.

The second comprehensive criminal complaint has now been filed against the employees already convicted in the previous trial as well as against other persons responsible at SIG Sauer in Germany and the USA. It is largely based on research by the film director Daniel Harrich as well as the SWR journalists Thomas Reutter and Manfred Hattendorf (ARD TV documentary "Deadly Exports 2"). The pistols, worth several million euros, were shipped via SIG Sauer Inc. in the USA to Mexico, Colombia and Nicaragua, a considerable proportion of them with the imprints "Made in Germany" or "Beschussamt Kiel".

Holger Rothbauer, lawyer for the campaign "Action Outcry – Stop the Arms Trade!", explains, "Should the suspicion be confirmed that, as the criminal trial at the court in Kiel was still ongoing, the same kinds of crimes were again committed by the same managers and employees at SIG Sauer, including new violations of the Foreign Trade Act through the shipment of thousands of pistols to war-torn countries – that would be the mount Everest of criminal behaviour. Suspended sentences should certainly no longer be the outcome of the next criminal conviction for these abominable acts. The public prosecutor's office in Kiel has confirmed the initial suspicion and has initiated a preliminary investigation to which it has assigned a file number".

The complainant Jürgen Grässlin comments, "This incident is unique in the history of German arms exports and is evidence of an unprecedented level of unscrupulousness: The suspended sentences imposed by the Kiel Regional

Court in the case of illegal pistol exports to Colombia were based on the assumption that the convicts at Sig Sauer would never again illegally export arms. Instead, SIG Sauer took advantage of the gap in the Mexican arms market created by the German government's ban on arms exports to Mexico following our criminal complaint against Heckler & Koch". According to Grässlin, spokesperson of the "Action Outcry – Stop the Arms Trade!" and the German Peace Society (DFG-VK), "the consequences of this small arms deal are lethal. Once again, due to these allegedly illegal arms transfers of SIG-Sauer weapons to the three Latin American countries innumerable innocent people will be mutilated or killed".

Ralf Willinger, children's rights expert at the children's charity terre des hommes and member of the supporting group of Action Outcry says, "Our research shows that the pistols that SIG Sauer has illegally exported to Colombia are used there for numerous crimes - by illegal armed groups such as paramilitaries, guerrillas and drug cartels, but also by members of the police and army. Those responsible at SIG Sauer are aware of this, and yet they apparently chose to continue to make illegal deliveries to Colombia, Mexico and Nicaragua. This ruthless business policy at the expense of the local people must be stopped as a matter of urgency".

Christine Hoffmann, spokeswoman of "Action Outcry – Stop the Arms Trade!" and secretary general of Pax Christi sees the recent arms export scandal as further proof, "that the final destination of small arms cannot be controlled and that even small arms exports to NATO states such as the USA are anything but unproblematic. In order to really prevent German small arms from being used in acts of violence and human rights violations, they must no longer be exported. A consistent ban on small arms exports is overdue."

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[Dossier by terre des hommes on human rights violations with SIG Sauer pistols in Colombia \(in German\)](#)

Supporting Organizations: Aktionsgemeinschaft Dienst für den Frieden e.V. (AGDF) • aktion hoffnung Rottenburg-Stuttgart e.V. • Bischöfliches Hilfswerk MISEREOR • Brot für die Welt - Evangelisches Werk für Diakonie und Entwicklung • Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend (BDKJ) • Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft – Vereinigte KriegsdienstgegnerInnen (DFG-VK) • Deutsche Sektion der Internationalen Ärzte für die Verhütung des Atomkrieges e. V. (IPPNW) Deutschland • NaturFreunde Deutschlands • Internationale katholische Friedensbewegung pax christi - Deutsche Sektion • JuristInnen gegen atomare, biologische und chemische Waffen (IALANA) Deutsche Sektion • Ohne Rüstung Leben (ORL) • Provinzleitung der Deutschen Franziskaner und Kommission Gerechtigkeit – Frieden – Bewahrung der Schöpfung • RüstungsInformationsBüro (RIB e.V.) • terre des hommes – Hilfe für Kinder in Not • Werkstatt für Gewaltfreie Aktion, Baden (WfG)

**Many more organizations and peace initiatives are collaborating
in the campaign "Action Outcry – Stop the Arms Trade!"**

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