

Licence Ref.	End Destination
SIE2012/006223	Macedonia
<p>Summary of Proposed Exports: 3G-N 2F IMSI catcher with 3G Blind Call</p> <p>Recommendation: Approval</p> <p>[Redacted]</p> <p>End User: Ministry of Interior, Skopje</p> <p>Agreed by: AEPD, Europe Directorate, British Embassy Skopje and HRDD</p>	

This equipment is designed for geo-locating and tracking purposes for 3G mobile phones.

Criteria Concerns and Risk Assessment:

The Criteria concerns for Macedonia are Criteria 2 and 3.

Criterion 2: *The respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country of final destination.*

[Redacted]

For your reference attached is the chart of the Organised Crime Department [redacted].

Organised crime remains a significant problem in Macedonia and there is an operational need for the MoI to have the best equipment to help combat it. In 2007/2008 legislative controls were adopted by the Macedonian Parliament that would enable telephone intercepts only for organised crime cases. Recent police operations against toll booth operators and the arrests of large numbers of police officers in eastern Macedonia in early 2012 are reminders of the challenge facing the police in combating organised crime. There have been recent high profile killings in Macedonia and an extensive effort was conducted to track perpetrators, involving telephone intercepts as an essential part of analysing the motives for the attack. Current legislative proposals being discussed in the Macedonian Parliament are aimed at removing the Minister of Interior's role in decisions around interception of communications and at improving Parliamentary oversight.

Since independence in 1991, human rights concerns for Macedonia have been addressed through pressure from the EU and US. The US has raised concerns in their latest Human Rights Report about the level of complaints relating to the excessive use of force by police and the potential for a culture of impunity. However the report also notes there were no acts of unlawful or arbitrary killings. The report also points to problems cited by NGOs about potential cases of arbitrary arrest or detention; though the report goes on to say that police generally followed the requirement for a warrant to be issued as is the proper practice. According to the Criminal Code all the warrants have to be authorised by the investigative judge and/or a public prosecutor. Of particular relevance to this licence request, the US report states that the government generally respects the prohibitions on arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence. The latest EU annual Progress Report notes that the MoI was willing in several cases to bring criminal cases against police officers alleged to have been involved in criminal offences. The EU states that cooperation between the Ministry of Justice and law enforcement agencies needs to be strengthened and that the collection and processing of information relating to the extent and nature of corruption remains deficient. The EU states that corruption remains a serious concern but also notes that the Ministry of Interior Unit responsible for internal control and professional standards has intensified its monitoring of police work.

[Redacted]

Conflict erupted in 2001 between ethnic Albanians and the ethnic Macedonian majority, over demands by the ethnic Albanians for greater rights and equality. Ethnic Albanians account for about a quarter of the population.

The conflict created a wave of refugees and the ethnic Albanian fighters made certain territorial gains. After months of skirmishes, EU and NATO support enabled the President, Boris Trajkovski, to strike a peace deal. Under the deal (the Ohrid Framework Agreement) ethnic Albanian fighters laid down their arms in return for greater ethnic-Albanian recognition within a unitary state. Acknowledgement of ethnic-Albanian rights was formalised in amendments to the Constitution approved by Parliament in late 2001.

[Redacted]

In the FCO's 2011 Human Rights and Democracy Report it states: In **Macedonia**, we continued to be strong supporters of the country's multi-ethnic fabric. This year saw the tenth anniversary of the signature of the 2001 Ohrid Framework peace Agreement (OFA), which paved the way for a decade of peace in Macedonia, and importantly has provided a generation with a set of values to which future generations can aspire – tolerance, inclusion and respect for the human rights of all minorities. We supported one of the key pillars of the OFA, languages, through funding a project implemented by the British Council and supporting an international academic conference on OFA to discuss progress in the past decade and challenges ahead.

[Redacted]

Political Background:

The Republic of Macedonia gained independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991 and became a member state of the UN eighteen months later. Wider international recognition was held up by Greek claims that the country's constitutional name implied territorial ambitions on the northern Greek region of Macedonia. In September 1995, following three years of difficult relations including a unilaterally imposed trade embargo, Greece and Macedonia signed an Interim Accord facilitating the normalisation of relations and acceptance by both countries of the temporary designation 'former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' (fYROM). However the name issue continues to hinder the bilateral relationship between Greece and Macedonia.

On 16 December 2005, the European Council decided to grant Candidate Status of the European Union to Macedonia. The 2008 Accession Partnership defined eight areas as key priorities within the EU reform agenda, including the full implementation of the EU Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) obligations, public administration reform, police reform, judicial reform, the fight against corruption, reducing unemployment and enhancing the business environment.

Macedonia is also seeking NATO membership. At the Bucharest Summit in April 2008 NATO allies agreed an invitation to join would be offered as soon as a mutually acceptable solution was reached with Greece on the name issue. Macedonia has already provided support to NATO's operations in Kosovo, EUFOR in Bosnia and has gradually increased its contribution to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan (currently over 150 personnel).

