

Germany Ends Ban on Arms Exports to Saudi Arabia Imposed After Khashoggi, Sells Missiles

BERLIN (AP) - The German government has approved the export of air-defense missiles to Saudi Arabia, underlining a softening of its hard line of recent years toward arms exports to the kingdom.

Government spokesperson Steffen Hebestreit on Wednesday confirmed a report by news magazine Der Spiegel that Germany's Security Council, made up of Chancellor Olaf Scholz and several other ministers, approved the export of 150 air-to-air missiles for the Iris-T air defense system at the end of 2023.

The government of then-Chancellor Angela Merkel imposed a ban on arms exports to Saudi Arabia following the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul in 2018. It later made a conditional exception for systems developed jointly with other countries.

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