

## Maersk Shareholders Vote Down Proposal to Ban Arms Shipments to Israel

Management denies shipping weapons or ammunition to a conflict zone



File image: The U.S.-flagged boxship Maersk Chicago participates in an exercise with a U.S. Navy destroyer in the Gulf of Aden, 2019 (USN file image)

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At an annual general meeting held Tuesday, Maersk shareholders voted down an activist investor resolution that would have banned the company from shipping arms to Israel.

Earlier this month, shareholder activist group Kritiske Aktionærer filed a proposal to stop number-two ocean carrier Maersk from shipping military cargoes to Israel. The motion was opposed by Maersk's board, and when it was put to a vote at the company's annual general meeting Tuesday, it did not pass.

Maersk denies shipping weapons or ammunition to Israel. In a statement Tuesday, it noted that its U.S. subsidiary - Maersk Line Ltd. (MLL) - has never even filed a transportation plan to ship "classified or sensitive cargo, which includes weapons and ammunition." MLL is a U.S. Maritime Security Program (MSP) participant, and it operates U.S.-flagged vessels that carry federal cargoes, including the military assistance shipments that are a critical element of U.S. foreign policy.

However, Maersk's critics have differing opinions about which cargoes could be considered "weapons." Investigative journalism group Danwatch has obtained [bills of lading](#) that appear to show that more than a dozen Maersk-owned ships carried thousands of tonnes of militarily-useful goods to Israel since the beginning of the Gaza conflict. In one example of a complete system delivery, one bill of lading appears to show that MLL shipped seven armor-equipped Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks (HEMTTs) to Haifa in November 2023. While HEMTTs are cargo vehicles, they meet EU

definitions for military equipment, and Israeli forces have used armored HEMTTs inside of Gaza for logistics and prisoner transport.

The tabloid Ekstra Bladet also [identified](#) nine bills of lading with HTS code 9306.90 (explosive munitions and parts thereof), four with HTS code 9305.91 (cannon parts), and 31 with HTS code 9306.30 (cartridge components).

"The transport of cargo on behalf of the US government does not contain weapons or ammunition. These shipments contain military-related equipment and are derived from US policy under the US-Israeli security cooperation program," Maersk told Ekstra Bladet in response.

In its statement Tuesday, Maersk again denied transporting weapons to Israel and pushed back against "misrepresentations" about its business.

"The [activist] campaign is spreading inaccurate allegations and has in some instances involved assumptions presented as documented facts and what looks like misleading information through twisting of publicly available data," said Maersk in a statement. "Unfortunately, we have also experienced vandalism and illegal, aggressive demonstrations on our premises and against our employees. This will not change our position or our business practice, guided by international standards."

The company said that it has a strict policy of not shipping weapons or ammunition to active conflict zones, and that it complies with all international regulations. "We fully recognize our responsibility as a global logistics provider and that it is on us to always reinforce the internationally agreed responsible business practices – even more so when operating in areas of active conflict," the carrier said in a statement.