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## **Commerce Department Broadens Authority to Review Licenses for Human Rights Concerns and Adopts New Controls on Water Cannons**

WASHINGTON...The Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) in the Department of Commerce expanded its ability to review most license applications for human rights concerns as well as expanded its licensing policy for reviewing crime control items today. BIS separately imposed new license requirements on water cannons for riot or crowd control purposes. The new rules, which are effective immediately, are designed to promote respect for human rights throughout the world and further the foreign policy interests of the United States pertaining to the prevention of human rights violations.

“We are seeing an unfortunate escalation in the use of advanced technologies, like night vision cameras and water cannons, to enable human rights abuses, especially in places like Hong Kong and Xinjiang in China,” said Acting Under Secretary for Industry and Security Cordell Hull. “We cannot allow U.S. goods and technology to be used for nefarious end uses such as censorship, surveillance, detention, or excessive use of force.”

One revision to the Export Administration Regulations (EAR) allows for the consideration of human rights concerns when reviewing license applications for any item except those controlled for short supply reasons. The amendment, referred to as the Human Rights Crossover Rule, also expands the licensing policy for crime control items to enable BIS and other reviewing agencies to consider (1) violations or abuses of human rights by individuals or entities other than the government of the importing country and (2) abuses of human rights by the government in addition to violations of internationally recognized human rights.

The second rule imposes a license requirement on exports and reexports of water cannon systems for riot or crowd control, specially designed parts and components, and related software and technology when destined to countries other than NATO member countries and certain other military allies. This revision also enables the U.S. Government to more effectively control exports of water cannons to the Hong Kong Police Force, consistent with a 2019 Congressional mandate to prohibit the licensing of such transactions.

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