

Whereas: As the world’s fourth-largest defense company, Northrop Grumman’s most severe human rights impacts are likely to result from the use of its products and services, such as controversial arms trade, military training, nuclear weapons, and border surveillance systems. Business relationships with the U.S. Government and foreign governments whose activities may be linked to human rights violations may expose Northrop Grumman to legal, financial, and reputational risks.

Under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), companies have a responsibility to respect human rights which is distinct from the duties of states. The high likelihood of severe impacts linked to business in conflict-affected and high-risk areas warrants heightened due diligence. A 2019 Amnesty International report found that the defense industry is failing to carry out effective human rights due diligence. This requires conducting human rights impact assessments to identify and evaluate the actual and potential adverse human rights impacts of the company’s business activities.¹ The findings from the impact assessments should inform business decision making, prevention and mitigation efforts, and public disclosure.

Northrop Grumman has contracts with or supplies weapons to multiple states engaged in conflict, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, India, Israel, Morocco, and Colombia.²

Northrop Grumman is one of the Saudi Arabian Armed Forces’s largest defense partners, supplying weapons since 1971, and is heavily involved in military training.³ A 2020 report by the UN Human Rights Council alleges that Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen “may amount to war crimes” and the supply of weapons from the U.S. and other countries “has helped to perpetuate the conflict.”⁴

The Department of State’s 2020 due diligence guidance on foreign sales of “products or services that have surveillance capabilities” states companies should consider if “the end-user will likely misuse the product or service to carry out human rights violations.”⁵

The company also has at least \$68.3 billion in outstanding nuclear weapons contracts with the U.S. and foreign governments.⁶ As the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons enters into force in 2021, nuclear weapons sales expose Northrop Grumman to increasing regulatory and reputational risks.

Northrop Grumman has a contract with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to develop infrastructure for the Homeland Advanced Recognition Technology (HART) database. It will hold

¹ <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/ACT3008932019ENGLISH.PDF>

² www.northropgrumman.com/AboutUs/OurGlobalPresence/Pages/default.aspx; www.upi.com/Defense-News/2015/10/16/Colombia-receives-Northrop-Grumman-ANTPS-78-radar/4871445000556/; www.moroccoworldnews.com/2018/05/246179/morocco-cargo-m1a2s-laser-tanks-us/; <https://news.northropgrumman.com/news/releases/northrop-grumman-delivers-center-fuselage-for-first-israeli-f-35-aircraft>

³ www.northropgrumman.com/AboutUs/OurGlobalPresence/MiddleEastAndAfrica/Pages/Who-We-Are-in-the-Middle-East.aspx

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/GEE-Yemen/2020-09-09-report.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/DRL-Industry-Guidance-Project-FINAL-1-pager-508-1.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.dontbankonthebomb.com/northrop-grumman/>

sensitive biometric and biographical data for 260 million people, which presents risks of privacy rights violations, increased surveillance, racial bias, and harm to immigrant communities.⁷

While Northrop Grumman has a Human Rights Policy, it does not disclose its salient human rights issues or the nature and extent of the participation of impacted rightsholders in its assessment process.

Resolved: Shareholders request that Northrop Grumman publish a report, at reasonable cost and omitting proprietary information, with the results of human rights impact assessments examining the actual and potential human rights impacts associated with high-risk products and services, including those in conflict-affected areas.

⁷<https://theintercept.com/2020/11/17/dhs-biometrics-dna/>;
<http://www.documentcloud.org/documents/6542043-MSLS-Industry-Day-Presentation-FINAL.html>