

Japan set for first arms export under new rules: report

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Japan is set to approve its first arms export following relaxation of its self-imposed ban, as the nation aims to boost its global military and economic presence, a report said Sunday.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries plans to export a high-performance sensor to the United States, which will use it in the Patriot Advanced Capability-2 (PAC-2) [missile](#) defence system to be exported to Qatar, the Nikkei business daily said without citing sources.

Tokyo's decision, likely to become official later this month, comes after Japan in April amended its traditional strict ban on arms exports, particularly in cases where the products might be re-exported to countries engaged in conflict.

The government under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe eased the rules to allow exports of military products in a move aimed at letting Japan join international joint programmes to develop weapons and to grow its defence industry.

Japan has concluded that the planned US transfer of the missile to Qatar was unlikely to escalate any conflicts, the Nikkei said.

Mitsubishi Heavy produces the PAC-2 sensor for Japan's Self Defense Forces under licence from Raytheon, the Nikkei said.

The US company however is scaling back production of PAC-2

components, as it is focusing on the next-generation PAC-3 missile interceptor system, it said.

The sensor is a key component of the infrared seeker set into the tip of the missile to identify and track incoming targets, the Nikkei said.

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