

Finnish police raid Patria premises over Egypt and Slovenia deals

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The Finnish defense and aerospace group reported on Wednesday that Finland National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) has launched preliminary investigations into Patria arms sales to Egypt and Slovenia

Patria added the police had raided offices in Hämeenlinna, Tampere and Vammala on Tuesday and seized documents. The police have arrested two people over corruption suspicions related to a tender process preceding the sale of Patria armored personnel carriers and mortars to Slovenia in 2006.

Patria said in its statement that Karel Erjavec, the Slovenian defense minister, had said in April that the tender process had been transparent and legal.

"Patria's understanding is that its personnel have followed all relevant legislation both in Slovenia and Finland," the statement added.

The second preliminary investigation focuses on the sale of howitzer manufacturing technology to Egypt between 1997 and 2004.

"Patria denies all these accusations of unethical business conduct in this project," the company said.

Most of Patria is owned by the Finnish state, with the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company holding a stake of about 27 per cent.

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