

Leaked Documents Reveal How U.S., Gulf Countries Ship Weapons to Terrorists Using Diplomatic Flight Cover

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Global Research, September 04, 2017
[Activist Post](#) 31 August 2017

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)
Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Media Disinformation](#),
[Terrorism](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*A recent report by Bulgarian journalist **Dilyana Gaytandzhieva** entitled, "[350 Diplomatic Flights Carry Weapons For Terrorists](#)," may very well have blown the lid on a secret program to provide weapons to terrorists in Iraq and Syria as well as anti-Houthi militants in Yemen. Gaytandzhieva's report claims that the documents leaked to her by anonymous sources show that the Azerbaijani airline Silk Way Airlines was contracted by companies in the United States, Israel, and the Balkans to the militaries of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates as well as U.S. Special Ops. Gaytandzhieva's own on-the-ground reporting also uncovered many weapons related to this secret trade in Aleppo after she had traveled there to investigate the story.*

PLEASE NOTE: It is important to visit Gaytandzhieva's original article in which she presents scanned copies of the documents sent to her.

Although Gaytandzhieva's report is months old, it gained wider traction in the alternative media after it was revealed she was subsequently interrogated by Bulgaria's intelligence services and then fired from her newspaper because of the story.

Gaytandzhieva reports that at least 350 diplomatic flights by Silk Way Airlines (an Azeri state-run company) transported weapons all across the world to various war zones over the past three years. She writes that the planes carried "tens of tons of heavy weapons and ammunition headed to terrorists under the cover of diplomatic flights." Gaytandzhieva says that the documents implicating Silk Way Airlines were sent to her on Twitter by [Anonymous Bulgaria](#).

She reports that the documents include correspondence between the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Embassy of Azerbaijan to Bulgaria. They also include documents which were attached requesting clearance for overflight and/or landing in Bulgaria and many other countries in Europe as well as the United States, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Turkey including others still.

According to Gaytandzhieva, the documents show Silk Way Airlines offering diplomatic flights to private companies and arm manufacturers in Israel, the Balkans, and the United States as well as the UAE, KSA, militaries and U.S. Special Ops Command (USSOCOM). The airline also offered its services to the militaries of Germany and Denmark in Afghanistan and to Sweden in Iraq.

According to Gaytandzhieva, the diplomatic flights were utilized because they are exempt

from checks, taxes, and air bills. For that reason, she states that the Silk Way planes transported “hundreds of tons of weapons to different locations around the world without regulation” and for free. The reporter writes that the planes made stops ranging from a few hours up to a whole day for no logical reason i.e. repair, refueling, etc., thus lending further evidence that the planes were indeed shipping weapons as a primary mission.

Gaytanzhieva writes that the International Air Transport Association (IATA) requires that

“Dangerous Goods, Regulations, operators, transporting dangerous goods forbidden transportation by civil aircrafts, must apply for exemption for transportation of dangerous goods by air.”

She states that, according to the documents she received, Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry sent instructions to its embassies in Bulgaria and other European countries requesting diplomatic clearance for Silk Way Airlines flights. The embassies then sent diplomatic notes to the Foreign Ministry of the host countries to request the exemption. The Foreign Ministry would then send back a note signed by the local civil aviation authorities granting the necessary exemption for the transport of the dangerous goods by air.

These requests, according to the documents and the report, included information about the type and quantity of the goods on board, listed as “heavy weapons and ammunition.” Still, Gaytanzhieva writes,

“the responsible authorities of many countries (Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Turkey, Germany, UK, Greece, etc.) have turned a blind eye and allowed diplomatic flights for the transport of tons of weapons, carried out by civil aircrafts for military needs.”

US Connection

The main customers of the “flights for weapons” program seem to be American companies which supply weaponry to the U.S. military and Special Operations Command. In the cases being addressed by Gaytanzhieva, however, all the weapons being transported are “non-standard” weapons, meaning those not used by the U.S. military or Special Ops.

According to the “register of federal contracts,” American companies were awarded contracts for \$1 billion over the last three years under a program for “non-US standard weapons supplies.” According to the documents analyzed by Gaytanzhieva, all of these companies used Silk Way Airlines for the weapons transport. In some cases where Silk Way Airlines was too busy to accommodate shipment, Azerbaijan Air Force planes were used to transport the weapons. The weapons, however, never reached Azerbaijan.

Gaytanzhieva writes,

The documents leaked from the Embassy include shocking examples of weapon transport. A case in point: on 12th May 2015 an aircraft of Azerbaijan Air Forces carried 7,9 tons of PG-7V and 10 tons of PG-9V to the supposed destination via the route Burgas (Bulgaria)-Incirlik (Turkey)-Burgas-Nasosny (Azerbaijan). The consignor was the American company Purple Shovel, and the consignee - the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan. According to the documents, however, the military cargo was offloaded at Incirlik military base and never

reached the consignee. The weapons were sold to Purple Shovel by Alguns, Bulgaria, and manufactured by Bulgaria's VMZ military plant.

According to the federal contracts registry, in December of 2014 USSOCOM signed a \$26.7 million contract with Purple Shovel. Bulgaria was indicated as the country of origin of the weapons.

On 6th June 2015, a 41-year old American national **Francis Norvello**, an employee of Purple Shovel, was killed in a blast when a rocket-propelled grenade malfunctioned at a military range near the village of Anevo in Bulgaria. Two other Americans and two Bulgarians were also injured. The US Embassy to Bulgaria then released a statement announcing that the U.S. government contractors were working on a U.S. military program to train and equip moderate rebels in Syria.

Which resulted in the U.S. Ambassador in Sofia to be immediately withdrawn from her post. The very same weapons as those supplied by Purple Shovel were not used by moderate rebels in Syria. In December of last year while reporting on the battle of Aleppo as a correspondent for Bulgarian media I found and filmed 9 underground warehouses full of heavy weapons with Bulgaria as their country of origin. They were used by Al Nusra Front (Al Qaeda affiliate in Syria designated as a terrorist organization by the UN).

Another U.S. contractor involved in the same program for non-US standard military supplies is Orbital ATK. This company received \$250 million over just the past two years. Information as to what type of weapons and to whom those weapons were supplied is classified.

According to the documents, Orbital ATK transported weapons on 6 diplomatic Silk Way Airlines flights in July and August of 2015 flying the route Baku (Azerbaijan)-Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina)-Baku-Kabul (Afghanistan). The weapons were exported by IGMAN j.j. Konjic, (Bosnia and Herzegovina) commissioned by Orbital ATK. The consignee was the National Police of Afghanistan. Interestingly, all these diplomatic flights with weapons had technical landings and a 7 h 30 min stop at Baku before their final destination - Afghanistan.

Military aircrafts of Azerbaijan transported 282 tons of cargo (PG-7VL and other grenades) on 10 diplomatic flights in April and May 2017 to the destination Baku-Rijeka (Croatia)-Baku. The consignor was the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan, and the consignee - Culmen International LLC, USA. This same company has been awarded two contracts (\$47 million each) along with other contractors for non-US standard weapon supplies on 18 February 2016 and 19 April 2017 respectively. Culmen International LLC has also signed a \$26.7 million contract for foreign weapons with the Department of Defense and a \$3.9 million contract for newly manufactured non-US standard weapons.

Chemring Military Products is another main contractor in the program for non-US standard weapon supplies to the US army through diplomatic Silk Way Airlines flights. This military supplier has 4 contracts for \$302.8 million in total. The weapons were purchased from local manufacturers in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania and according to documents transported to Iraq and Afghanistan via diplomatic flights.

One of those flights in particular, on 18 October 2016, carrying 15.5 tons of 122 mm rockets bought by Chemring in Belgrade, Serbia, was diverted from its destination - Kabul, and instead landed in Lahore, Pakistan. After a 2-hour stop, the aircraft took off to Afghanistan. The only possible explanation for the extension of the flight by a thousand kilometers is offloading in Pakistan, even though documents stated that the cargo was destined for Afghanistan.

The largest non-US standard weapons supplier to the US army is Alliant Techsystems Operations-USA with contracts totalling \$490.4 million. In December of 2016, this company transported tons of grenades (API 23×115 mm, HE 23×115 mm, GSH 23×115 mm) from Yugoimport, Serbia to the Afghani Defense Ministry on diplomatic flights to the destination Baku-Belgrade-Kabul.

The Saudi Connection

The United States is by no means the sole patron of Silk Way Airlines and the diplomatic cover business for arms transfers. As many as 23 diplomatic flights carrying weapons from Bulgaria, Serbia, and Azerbaijan to Riyadh and Jedda were utilized according to Gaytanzhieva's investigation. The consignees were listed as VMC military plant and Transmobile of Bulgaria, Yugoimport in Serbia, and CIHAZ in Azerbaijan, according to the documents.

It must be noted that KSA was clearly not purchasing those weapons for itself because KSA only uses Western weapons. It seems obvious that, if the documents are accurate, the weapons were those being funneled to terrorists in Syria and Yemen. KSA also provides weapons to southern Africa where wars, civil wars, warlords, and terror are commonplace due to the region's vast amounts of natural wealth.

Gaytanzhieva writes,

On 28 April and 12 May this year, Silk Way carried out two diplomatic flights from Baku to Burgas-Jeddah-Brazzaville (Republic of Congo). The military cargo on-board of both flights was paid for by Saudi Arabia, according to the documents leaked from Azerbaijan's Embassy to Bulgarian sources. The aircraft made a technical landing at Jeddah airport with a 12 h 30 min stop for the first flight and 14 h stop for the second one.

The aircraft was loaded with mortars and anti-tank grenades including SPG-9 and GP-25. These very same weapons were discovered by the Iraqi army a month ago in an Islamic State warehouse in Mosul. Islamic State jihadists are also seen using those heavy weapons in propaganda videos posted online by the terrorist group. Interestingly, the consignee on the transport documents, however, is the Republican Guards of Congo.

Coyote machine gun 12,7x108 mm appeared in videos and photos posted online by militant groups in Idlib and the province of Hama in Syria. The same type of weapon was transported on a diplomatic flight via Turkey and Saudi Arabia a few months earlier.

In February and March of 2017, Saudi Arabia received 350 tons of weapons on Silk Way diplomatic flights flying to the route Baku-Belgrade-Prince Sultan-Baku. The cargo included 27 350 pcs. 128-mm Plamen-a rockets and 10 000 pcs. 122 mm Grad rockets. The consignor was Tehnoremont Temerin, Serbia to order by Fameway Investment LTD, Cypruss.

On 5 March 2016, an Azerbaijan Air Force aircraft carried 1700 pcs. RPG-7 (consignor: Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan) and 2500 pcs. PG-7VM (consignor: Transmobile Ltd., Bulgaria) for the Defense Ministry of Saudi Arabia.

Diplomatic flights from Burgas Airport to Prince Sultan Airport on 18 and 28 February 2017 each carried a further 5080 pcs. 40 mm PG-7V for RPG-7 and 24

978 psc. RGD-5. The weapons were exported by Transmobile, Bulgaria to the Ministry of Defense of Saudi Arabia. Such munitions and RPG-7 originating in Bulgaria can often be seen in videos filmed and posted by the Islamic State on their propaganda channels.

UAE Connection

UAE also uses western standard weapons for its military. However, it is also another country that purchased non-standard weapons which were then apparently transferred to a third party. Gaytanzhieva writes,

On three flights to Burgas-Abu Dhabi-Swaihan in March and April of 2017, Silk Way transported 10.8 tons of PG7VM HEAT for 40 mm RPG-7 on each flight with technical landing and a 2-hour stop in Abu Dhabi. The exporter is Samel-90, Bulgaria, the importer - Al Tuff International Company LLC. The latter company is involved with Orbital ATK LLC, which is the Middle East subsidiary of the American military company Orbital ATK. Although the ultimate consignee is the UAE army, the documents of the flight reveal that the sponsoring party is Saudi Arabia.

Cash And Carry

Gaytanzhieva reports that, on February 26, 2016, an Azeri Air Force plane took off from Baku and landed in UAE. At this point, it loaded two armored vehicles and a Lexus car. The payment, according to the "request for clearance" documents showed that the payment was made in U.S. dollars cash. The plane then landed in North Sudan and, the next day, it landed in the Republic of Congo. Safe Cage Armour Works FZ LLC., UAE was listed as the exporter and the Republican Guards of the Congo was listed as the receiving entity. Saudi Arabia was the sponsoring party.

White Phosphorous

Although not specifically considered a "chemical weapon" in the traditional sense, white phosphorous is, in effect, a chemical agent. It is used largely for its smoke screening purposes but there is also a psychological element since contact with white phosphorous results in excruciatingly painful deep first, second, and third degree burns.

The use of white phosphorous over heavily populated civilian areas is prohibited under international law. In fact, white phosphorous is only allowed if the agent is being used for the purposes of masking or camouflage. If being used as a weapon, it is banned as a chemical weapon under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

With that in mind, Gaytanzhieva writes,

White Phosphorus is an incendiary weapon whose use is very controversial due to the deadly harms it can inflict. On 31 March 2015, Silk Way transported 26 tons of military cargo including white phosphorus from Serbia (exporter: Yugoimport) and 63 tons from Bulgaria (exporter: Arsenal). On 22 March, another 100 tons of white phosphorus were exported from Yugoimport, Belgrade to Kabul. No contract is attached to the documents of those flights.

On 2 May 2015, a Silk Way aircraft loaded 17 tons of ammunition, including

white phosphorus, at Burgas airport. The exporter was Dunarit, Bulgaria. The aircraft made a technical landing and a 4-hour stop at Baku before reaching its final destination – Kabul. The consignee was the Afghani police. No contract is attached as proof.

Baku - The Secret Weapons Hub For The World

Although Azerbaijan's Ministry of Defense is routinely listed as the consignee for weapons, it routinely did not receive the arms it was slated to obtain. For instance, according to Gaytanzhieva, on May 6, 2015, an Azeri military plane flew to Burgas, Bulgaria to Incirlik Turkey and back to Burgas. That flight carried aviation equipment from Bulgaria to Turkey with EMCO LTD, Sofia listed as the consigner and the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan listed as the consignee. The cargo, however, was unloaded in Turkey and never even touched down in Azerbaijan.

Gaytanzhieva asserts that some of the weapons carried on diplomatic Azeri flights were used by Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh against Armenia. Back in 2016, Azerbaijan accused Armenia of using white phosphorous but Armenia denied the Azeri allegations. Armenia accused Azerbaijan of making the story up for propaganda purposes. Indeed, she writes, the only evidence that Azerbaijan could produce was one unexploded grenade discovered by Azeri soldiers. She also asserts that documents from the Embassy of Azerbaijan in Sofia, Bulgaria showed that white phosphorous weapons were transported on a diplomatic flight via Baku in 2015.

She writes,

Baku plays the role of an international hub for weapons. Many of the flights make technical landings with stops of a few hours at Baku airport or other intermediary airports en-route to their final destinations. Moreover, these types of aircrafts flying to the same destinations do not typically make technical landings. Therefore, a landing for refueling is not actually required. Despite this, Silk Way aircrafts constantly made technical landings. A case in point: in December of 2015 Silk Way carried out 14 flights with 40 tons of weapons on each flight to the destination Ostrava (the Czech Republic)-Ovda (Israel)-Nososny (Azerbaijan). The exporter is not mentioned in the documents while the receiver is consistently the Defense Ministry of Azerbaijan. Strangely, the aircraft diverted and landed at Ovda airport (a military base in Southern Israel), where it remained for 2 hours.

In 2017, there were 5 flights from Nish (Serbia) via Ovda (Israel) to Nasosny (Azerbaijan). Each flight carried 44 tons of cargo – SPG Howitzer, RM-70/85. The consignor is MSM Martin, Serbia, the consignee: Elbit Systems, Israel, and the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan. All aircrafts landed in Israel and stayed for 2 hours en-route to Azerbaijan.

The same Israeli company Elbit Systems on a flight from Barno (the Czech Republic) via Tel Aviv (Israel) to Bratislava (Slovakia) re-exported armored vehicles (TATRA T-815 VP31, TATRA T-815 VPR9). They were sent by Real Trade, Prague to Elbit Systems. The ultimate consignee, however, was the Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan. The aircraft landed in Tel Aviv and then in Bratislava, where the cargo was imported by another company – MSM Martin, Slovakia. It is not clear why the plane flew from Europe to Asia and then back to Europe with the same cargo on-board. Ultimately, it did not reach its final destination – Azerbaijan. This type of aircraft, IL 76TD, can carry cargo of up to 50 tons. This one carried only 30 tons according to the documentation

provided. Therefore, it could carry additional cargo of 20 tons. Since the flight was diplomatic, it was not subjected to inspection.

Burkina Faso's Military Coup

Gaytanzhieva also draws a connection between diplomatic weapons flights landing in Brazzaville, Burkina Faso, dropping off non-standard weapons. A week after the weapons were dropped a coup was attempted in the country. She writes,

Some diplomatic flights carry weapons for different conflict zones crossing Europe, Asia and Africa. Such is the case with two Azerbaijan Air Forces flights to the destination Baku-Belgrade-Jeddah-Brazzaville-Burkina Faso on 30 August and 5 September 2015. The consignors were CIHAZ, Azerbaijan, and Yugoimport, Serbia. The consignee was the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Congo. The aircraft made two technical landings - in Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

The 41.2-ton cargo from Baku and Belgrade included: 7, 62 mm cartridges, 12 pcs. sniper rifles, 25 pcs. M12 "Black Spear" calibre 12,7x108 mm, 25 psc. RBG 40x46 mm/6M11, and 25 pcs. Coyote machine gun 12,7x108 mm with tripods. The same heavy machine gun appeared in videos and photos posted online by militant groups in Idlib and the province of Hama in Syria a few months later. The aircraft also carried: 1999 psc. M70B1 7,62x39 mm and 25 psc. M69A 82 mm. On 26 February 2016, a video featuring the same M69A 82 mm weapons was posted to Youtube by a militant group calling itself Division 13 and fighting north of Aleppo.

Interestingly, the aircraft that carried the same type of weapons landed in Diyarbakir (Turkey), 235 km away from the border with Syria. Another type of weapon, RBG 40 mm/6M11, which was from the same flight and supposedly destined for Congo too, appeared in a video of the Islamic Brigade of Al Safwa in Northern Aleppo.

After Turkey, the aircraft landed in Saudi Arabia and remained there for a day. Afterwards it landed in Congo and Burkina Faso. A week later, there was an attempted military coup in Burkina Faso.

The Kurdish Connection

Gaytanzhieva also documents how Kurdish groups such as the YPG have been receiving arms transporting by these secret diplomatic flights. She writes,

In March of 2017, over 300 tons of weapons were allegedly sent to the People's Protection Units (YPG) in Northern Syria. Six diplomatic flights transported 43 tons of grenades on each flight from VMZ Military Plant, Bulgaria, to the Defense Ministry of Iraq. There are no contracts applied, however. On 28 March, 82 tons of cargo (AKM 7,62x39 mm and AG-7) were sent from Otopeni (Romania) to Erbil (Iraqi Kurdistan). The consignor was Romtechnica S.A., the consignee - again the Ministry of Defense in Baghdad. No contracts are provided for this flight either.

On 16 March 2016, yet another Silk Way diplomatic flight carried 40 tons of military cargo from Slovenia to Erbil: the exporter is ELDON S.R.O., Slovakia, the importer - Wide City Ltd. Co, Erbil, the final consignee - the government of Kurdistan.

Wide City Ltd. Co has three offices - in Limassol (Cyprus), Sofia (Bulgaria) and Erbil. The office of the Bulgarian company Techno Defence Ltd is at the address in Sofia. On the website of the company, the owner of Techno Defense Ltd Hair Al Ahmed Saleh claims that he has an office in Erbil and that his company manufactures Zagros weapons in Azerbaijan (K15 zagros, 9×19 mm and automatic K16 zagros). These types of Zagros weapons appeared in propaganda footage posted by the military wing of the Kurdish PKK party, which is designated as a terrorist organisation by Turkey. The President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliev is also an ethnical Kurd.

Gaytanzhieva states that she reached out to all sides for questions and statements on her investigation but never received an answer or comment.

Gaytanzhieva Fired From Newspaper After Questioning

Although the report was months old, Qatari-based al-Jazeera ran the story and revealed that Gaytanzhieva had been interrogated by the Bulgarian national security services and subsequently fired from her job with the paper. The reporter later tweeted and confirmed that she had indeed been questioned by security services and fired from her job.

Conclusion

I've just got fired for telling the truth about weapons supplies for [#terrorists](#) in [#Syria](#) on diplomatic flights <https://t.co/wSJTRlZKnR>

— Dilyana Gaytandzhiev (@dgaytandzhieva) [August 24, 2017](#)

Gaytanzhieva's report is groundbreaking to say the least not simply because she has exposed the fact that Western and gulf countries are procuring weapons for conflicts across the globe but also because she has exposed the direct mechanism that they have undertaken to accomplish the weapons facilitation. Her report exposes the fact that these weapons did not simply make it in to the hands of the moderate cannibals known as "rebels" by the Western corporate press but also into the hands of al-Qaeda and al-Nusra. In other words, these weapons found their way into the hands of ISIS since ISIS and Nusra/Qaeda are essentially the same organization.

Brandon Turbeville - [article archive here](#) - is the author of seven books, [Codex Alimentarius](#) — [The End of Health Freedom](#), [7 Real Conspiracies](#), [Five Sense Solutions](#) and [Dispatches From a Dissident, volume 1](#) and [volume 2](#), [The Road to Damascus: The Anglo-American Assault on Syria](#), [The Difference it Makes: 36 Reasons Why Hillary Clinton Should Never Be President](#), and [Resisting The Empire: The Plan To Destroy Syria And How The Future Of The World Depends On The Outcome](#). Turbeville has published over 1000 articles on a wide variety of subjects including health, economics, government corruption, and civil liberties. Brandon Turbeville's radio show *Truth on The Tracks* can be found every Monday night 9 pm EST at [UCYTV](#). His website is [BrandonTurbeville.com](#) He is available for radio and TV interviews. Please contact [activistpost](#) (at) [gmail.com](#).

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