

# CAAT*news*



# DIESO WE WON!



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CAAT was set up in 1974 and is a broad coalition of groups and individuals working for the reduction and ultimate abolition of the international arms trade, together with progressive demilitarisation within arms-producing countries.

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COVER: CAAT



**DESO protest at Farnborough 2006. See pages 8–9** CAAT

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# We've shut DESO

A question put to us recently is: what's CAAT's next campaigning success? After two victories in quick succession – the announcement that the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO), the Government's arms sales unit, is to shut came hot on the heels of Reed Elsevier's decision to sell its arms fairs – is supporting arms exports becoming a liability?

Others questioned whether our celebrations are premature. They suggested that Prime Minister Gordon Brown's announcement on 25 July that DESO would close by the end of the year in reality meant that its functions would continue, but, spread between departments, would be harder to campaign against.

Evidence that DESO's closure is a victory for CAAT and other campaigners was not slow to emerge. On 28 July the *Daily Telegraph* ran a report saying how angry the arms industry was at the decision and the *Telegraph* website featured a copy of a 'furious' letter from BAE Systems' Chief Executive Mike Turner to Gordon Brown demanding a meeting. This demand does not appear to have been acceded to.

## Why the success now?

DESO, originally known as the Defence Sales Organisation, was established by Labour Defence Secretary Denis Healey in 1966. CAAT was set up in 1974 and almost immediately started campaigning to shut DESO. Over the years there have been vigils outside its offices, signatures collected on petitions, media photo opportunities, Early Day Motions (a kind of parliamentary petition) – all calling for the closure of the Government's arms sales unit. So why now? What worked in 2007 that didn't in 1977, 1987 or 1997? That is a question being asked in the CAAT office and we would like to hear from you if you have ideas about it.



**Protest outside the (then) DSO office in 1980** CAAT


One factor may be that the arms industry itself has changed. No longer is there an easily identified UK arms industry whose main purpose is to supply the UK armed forces. Arms companies are part of a globalised industry. The world's third largest arms company, BAE Systems, may be UK-based, but it sells more to the United States' Department of Defense than it does to the UK Ministry of Defence. Over half its shares are held overseas and only a third of its employees are UK-based. This end to a national arms industry means it has become increasingly difficult for the Government to justify DESO's support for these companies.

## Next steps

Gordon Brown's announcement said that in future military export promotion would be the responsibility of UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), the body that supports all UK exports. The statement said that the Cabinet Office would be leading work across Government to develop an implementation plan by the end of 2007. The 200 DESO staff who are employed on the Saudi Armed Forces Project, paid for by the Saudi Arabian government, will stay in the Ministry of Defence.

At the time of writing, CAAT has still to ascertain exactly what consultation will be taking place on the changes, but we have been told that the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR), rather than the Cabinet Office, is now co-ordinating this.

Military equipment accounts for less than two per cent of the UK's visible exports and UK Defence Statistics show that 65,000 jobs (just 0.2 per cent of the national labour force) are sustained by military exports. Relative to this, DESO received thirteen times the budget of UKTI, which currently covers 39 industrial sectors. It is vital that the 250 DESO staff who do not work on the Saudi Project do not move en bloc to the UKTI, or in any other way come to dominate its trade promotion work. ANN FELTHAM

 Please write to your MP at the House of Commons, Westminster, London SW1A 0AA or email them – (usually) [surnameinitial@parliament.uk](mailto:surnameinitial@parliament.uk) – saying how pleased you are that DESO is to close. Also ask him or her to let the Secretary of State for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform know that you think that the military equipment sector's exports should be given no greater share of UKTI resources than is proportional to the size of the sector's contribution to the economy.

## Further info

On the centre pages you will find lots more information about campaigning against the Defence Sales Organisation and the Defence Export Services Organisation over the years. If you have any pictures, or memories of the campaign, please do share them with us.



## MoD questions Eurofighter contract

The Ministry of Defence is trying to get out of a £5bn contract to buy Eurofighter Typhoons, as the Treasury is not allowing it to buy both the Typhoons and the Joint Strike Fighter aircraft. The MoD has asked the Eurofighter consortium for the cost of each aircraft if it ordered fewer than the planned 88. It is also considering delaying or cancelling the order entirely. Cancellation would be a blow to BAE Systems as it could bring production of the Eurofighter to an end before further export orders are secured. *TIMES, 13/9/07*

## UK exports

A Saferworld report on UK weapons exports found that, during 2006, the UK government approved arms exports to 19 of the 20 countries it identified as 'countries of concern' for abusing human rights. The UK also authorised the export of more than 15,000 sniper rifles to countries including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey: countries where it is difficult to trace the weapons' destination.

*GUARDIAN, 25/7/07*

## Arms to Middle East

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has said that Iran is the target of a proposed \$63bn arms package. The sales, due to go to Saudi Arabia and other Gulf allies, are intended to create a bulwark against Iran. Rice described Iran as 'the single most important single-country strategic challenge to the United States and to the kind of Middle East that we want to see.'

Iran accused Washington of starting an arms race to help the US military industry. Other observers say that the package marks an end to US

aspirations to spread democracy, as main recipients include regimes criticised for human rights abuses.

*GUARDIAN, 1/8/07*

## Burma

Human rights groups have said that a proposed arms deal, in which aircraft are supplied by India, may mean that EU and American companies are involved in the production of military helicopters for Burma. The Indian government is close to agreeing a Burmese request for the helicopters, whose manufacture involves European and American companies. The UK connection is through the firms APPH Hydraulics and FPT Industries Ltd, a part of GKN Aerospace Services Ltd.

Helen Hughes of Amnesty International said: 'Greater attention has to be given to the end uses agreements and the re-export of components from EU member states.'

*INDEPENDENT, 16/7/07*

## BAE prize gets diverted

An engineering student has donated money he was awarded as a prize by BAE Systems to CAAT. The student at Loughborough University was awarded the prize for being the "most improved student", but he was also a most concerned student about the millions accepted from BAE by his university. He said: "The influence of BAE over the course was pretty heavy, the steering committee was BAE dominated, the studies were often BAE oriented. Engineers can do a lot more with their skills than just help the arms trade".

*PRIVATE EYE, 14/9/07*

## Thales

The military company Thales may be about to generate more sales in the UK than in its home country, France. Thales is already the largest foreign arms supplier to the Ministry of Defence and is hoping to win a number of key contracts this autumn.

*INDEPENDENT, 13/9/07*

## Libya deals

European military group EADS has confirmed that a consortium of which it is part has finalised an anti-tank missile deal with Libya.

Meanwhile, French president Nicolas Sarkozy confirmed an inquiry into recent weapons deals with Libya. French opposition politicians demanded the probe after concerns over France's role in persuading Libya to release six prisoners.

*REUTERS, 3/8/07; FINANCIAL TIMES, 4/8/07*

## Romania to sue BAE?

Romania is considering suing BAE Systems for breach of contract after a deal in which Romania bought two frigates and, in return, BAE was supposed to buy services and products from Romanian companies.

*JURNALUL NATIONAL ONLINE, 07/9/07*

## Pentagon errors

Lockheed Martin has been told to return \$265m to the Pentagon after a billing error in paperwork for the Joint Strike Fighter. Lockheed officials discovered that award fees to the company had been overpaid since 2002.

This is not the only instance of flawed Pentagon accounting: a recent report by Congress's Government Accountability Office questioned whether the Pentagon has kept adequate track of weapons and equipment in Iraq. The Pentagon cannot account for 190,000 guns provided to the Iraqi security forces.

*DEFENSE NEWS, 13/8/07; FINANCIAL TIMES, 7/8/07*

## Pakistan aid increase

US military aid to Pakistan is likely to increase after a warning from US intelligence officials that Al-Qaeda is re-building its forces in the country. The US has already provided air assault training to Pakistani forces so that they can operate in remote tribal areas. JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 1/8/07

## SAS resignation

The commanding officer of the SAS is believed to have been offered a lucrative job in the security industry after handing in his resignation. The resignation will come as a blow to the already understaffed SAS.

DAILY TELEGRAPH, 17/7/07

## Aircraft parts

The US Congress's Government Accountability Office has also found that the Pentagon mistakenly sold the public about 1,400 aircraft parts known to be sought by Iran for its fleet of F-14 Tomcat fighter planes. The parts were subject to controls that should have kept them from the public. All but two of the 1,385 parts have now been retrieved.

DEFENSE NEWS, 6/8/07

## Russian small arms

State-owned export organisation Rosoboronexport announced that foreign sales of Russian small arms have increased by more than 60 per cent over the past five years. One of the main buyers is Venezuela, where Russia is also planning to produce Kalashnikov rifles.

JANE'S DEFENCE INDUSTRY, AUGUST 07

## Russia finance to Indonesia

Russia is to finance a \$1.2bn arms package for Indonesia. The credit facility will be used to buy weaponry including helicopters, tanks and submarines.

Indonesia's military procurement budget was cut in August in order to divert money to aid for people affected by the 2006 mudflow disaster in the country's East Java province.

FLIGHT INTERNATIONAL, 11-17 SEPTEMBER 07; JANE'S DEFENCE INDUSTRY, SEPTEMBER 07

## IAF train in UK

Twelve Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots have been training in the new Hawk Advanced Jet Trainer at RAF Valley in Wales. The training is part of a BAE Systems package that includes the sale to the Indian Air Force of 66 of the new Hawk aircraft.

JANE'S DEFENCE WEEKLY, 11/7/07

## BAE profits

BAE Systems revealed forecast-beating results in August. The figures were boosted by military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The profit for the period was £501m, nearly double the £293m of the same period last year. INDEPENDENT, 10/8/07

## Pentagon overpays

The owner of a hardware company has admitted to defrauding the Pentagon out of more than \$20m, in one case charging almost \$1m for shipping two washers costing 19 cents.

Over nearly 10 years, the firm exploited an automated shipping payment system designed to speed up shipments to US forces overseas. The system has since been changed.

GUARDIAN UNLIMITED, 17/8/07

## Top military spenders

Source: SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) Yearbook 2006

	\$billion
USA	528.7
UK	59.2
France	53.1
China	49.5
Japan	43.7

## Top arms exporters

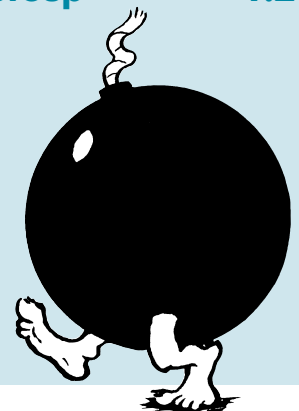
Source: Congressional Research Service, Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1998-2005, 23 October 2006

	\$billion
USA	11.55
UK	3.1
Russia	2.8
France	1.6
China	0.9

## Top UK-headquartered arms companies

Source: www.defensenews.com

	\$billion
BAE Systems	25.071
Rolls Royce	4.062
QinetiQ	1.513
GKN Group	1.376
VT Group	1.218



# Call to action: Saudi royal visits UK

King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia is planning a state visit to the UK from 30 October to 1 November.

Saudi Arabia has long been BAE Systems' favourite dictatorship. When BAE lobbied for the dropping of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) inquiry, it insisted that the inquiry was threatening a Saudi order for Eurofighter aircraft. Tony Blair claimed that the inquiry had been suspended to maintain good relations with an ally in the 'war on terror'.

The reality is that the Saudi regime uses terror against its own people. Criticism of the government is brutally suppressed with routine torture and execution. King Abdullah permits no national elections, political parties or trade unions. Both Muslims and non-Muslims face severe persecution if they differ from the royal family's understanding of religion.

The Saudi regime signed the Eurofighter contract in September. It had been delayed for months due to Saudi embarrassment over the public outrage that greeted the decision to drop the SFO inquiry. This decision exposed the level of BAE's influence in the corridors of power and triggered a swing in public opinion against the arms trade.

BAE will be hoping that King Abdullah is reassured of UK friendship during his visit. Conversely, CAAT is expecting widespread support for a demonstration on 30 October to coincide with Abdullah's arrival in the UK. The demonstration, which will be both lawful and nonviolent, will call for the reopening of the SFO inquiry and for an end to the Government's subservience to BAE and the Saudi regime.



**Saudi King Abdullah welcomes former British Prime Minister Tony Blair in Jeddah, September 2007**

Arrangements are being finalised at the time of going to press. For final details visit [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk) or call 020 7281 0297. SYMON HILL

## Study war no more

In November, CAAT's Universities Network and the Fellowship of Reconciliation will be publishing a study of military involvement in 26 UK universities between 2001 and 2006. The report, *Study War No More*, intends to support students concerned about the very real impact that their institutions have on international peace and conflict. It is also intended to encourage debate over the democratic deficit within academic institutions and the ends and ethics of research and research funding. Universities are publicly funded institutions and yet information on military funding of higher education is not always readily available in the public domain. Where resources do exist, the information is often partial and out of context. As such, we have used the Freedom of Information Act,

internet research and questionnaires to create as clear a picture of the relationship between universities and military organisations as possible.

### Big money

Our research has uncovered hundreds of university projects worth, in total, many millions of pounds. The projects mainly consist of research work sponsored by military organisations, both public and private, including the Ministry of Defence and BAE Systems. The study will consider how much influence military organisations have over Research & Development priorities and will ask why military organisations are choosing to contract so much work out to the university sector, particularly to their science, engineering and technology departments. Another key question

investigated in the report is the extent to which public money is used to subsidise projects that support both the development of military technology and the profits of arms companies. For example, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (through its collaborative research scheme) joined military organisations in sponsoring a significant number of the military projects at the universities covered by our report.

### Campaign

By documenting these links we aim to expose the scale of the university-military relationship and stimulate a debate concerning the effects that military involvement in universities has on academia and society at large. The campaign will include a speaking tour of UK universities and an activist website that will be a resource for students and staff, helping them bring transparency, accountability and democracy to their campuses. TIM STREET

# Local group news

## Chichester CAAT awareness-raising day

Just a peace flag and a table outside the Assembly Rooms in Chichester proved the perfect props to make people on a busy Saturday morning aware of the existence of our Chichester CAAT group. CAAT supporters formed a rota to promote the group and its activities. The stall highlighted the fact that the DSEi arms fair was coming to London the following week, and also raised awareness of the Control BAE campaign. Many passers-by took an interest in the group and campaigns, with many taking information away and wanting to get involved in the CAAT group.

We look forward to building on this successful day with a public meeting (part of the CAAT and Corner House speaking tour) on 8th November about the Control BAE Campaign and legal challenge. All welcome! CAROL ALLEN



**Blockade in Norwich** NORFOLK CAAT

## Blockade of Norwich weapons manufacturer

Various peace groups, including Norfolk CAAT, came together on 7 September to protest at local weapons firm MSI Defence Systems as it prepared to take its wares to the DSEi arms fair in London.

Local activists arrived before the 7am shift. When workers arrived, they found the gate locked. Armed only with their bodies, banners and information, the activists stood in the roadway which was then further blocked by a lorry, which Irene Willis, CAAT campaigner from Essex, had locked on to with a bicycle lock. She was cut away by a fire officer at 8.40am and arrested for Aggravated Trespass.

Photos and articles of the protest made the local papers and an interview was broadcast on Radio Norfolk's main evening news.

LESLEY GRAHAME

## Other news

Speakers from both CAAT and The Corner House will tour the UK during November to do a series of public meetings about the Control BAE campaign. This is timed to coincide with the Control BAE month of action (see below). Check the list for a location near you – this is a great opportunity to find out more about the issues, the legal challenge and the campaign to get the Saudi-BAE corruption inquiry reopened. It is also an excellent chance to meet other campaigners in your area. Exact times and venues to be confirmed – please call the CAAT office for more details.

Thurs 1 Nov – Norwich; Mon 5 Nov – Birmingham; Wed 7 Nov – Cardiff; Thurs 8 Nov – Chichester; Tues 13 Nov – Hull; Wed 14 Nov – Sheffield; Thurs 15 Nov – Manchester; Wed

28 Nov – Edinburgh; Thurs 29 Nov – Newcastle

### Control BAE month of action

CAAT is calling on all local campaigners and groups to take concerted action in November as part of the Control BAE campaign. We can provide ideas, support and resources. Please consider taking action in your area, whether through a street stall, public meeting, stunt, protest or other action. Contact [beccie@caat.org.uk](mailto:beccie@caat.org.uk) if you are interested and watch this space for more details.

### New Christian Network pack now available

After almost two years in gestation, the revised Christian Network Introductory Pack is now available. The new pack, the first major revision

of this resource since 1994, includes relevant Bible readings and studies, prayers, a Christian reflection on the arms trade and a history of the network. To order a copy please email [christian@caat.org.uk](mailto:christian@caat.org.uk) or call the CAAT office on 020 7281 0297.

BECCIE D'CUNHA

## Heather Woolley

Heather Woolley, who died at the end of August, was a committed peace campaigner. She was a CAAT Local Contact since 2001, played an active role in the Sheffield CAAT group and sat on the CAAT Steering Committee in 2005. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

# ANOTHER STEP ENDING THE A

On 25 July – while CAAT campaigners were still reeling from the news that publishing company Reed Elsevier had decided to stop organising arms fairs – Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced that the Defence Export Services Organisation, the Government's arms sales unit, would be closed by the end of 2007. Such campaign successes are rare, so two hugely significant wins in the space of just two months is worth celebrating.

## Background

The campaign to close DESO has been long and colourful. Since CAAT's beginnings in 1974, closing the Government's arms sales unit has been a priority. From as early as April 1975, in CAAT's fourth ever newsletter, it was reported that CAAT was trying to meet the Head of the Defence Sales Organisation (as DESO was then called) and supporters were urged to write to him.

The persistent campaigning over nearly three decades laid the groundwork for this tremendous campaign success. Nevertheless we started our recent Shut DESO campaign in spring 2006 in the somewhat daunting knowledge that DESO and the arms industry it supports are hugely influential, yet very few people had even heard of it: it was set to be a difficult and complex campaign and we braced ourselves for the long haul. Then, just over a year later, we hear the astounding news that DESO is to shut!

## How we won

So how did we do it? One important strategy was to target the Treasury with our postcard and letter-writing campaign, winning the economic arguments as well as the ethical ones. The hook we identified was the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review which we highlighted as an opportunity to review DESO's function as a public body. The Treasury had the added advantage of being a less popular target for such campaigns and, thus, more likely to take notice (this expectation was born out). Moreover, though we knew that Blair was unlikely to close DESO while in power, Gordon Brown, as probable next Prime Minister, might be more likely to if we could influence him in his Treasury role. We also set out to educate and persuade as many MPs as possible and ask them to raise the issue with the Prime Minister (as the person with the power to close DESO).

One shorter-term aim of the Shut DESO campaign was to lift the organisation out of obscurity. In this we

succeeded, through local campaigners raising awareness with street polls, stalls, petitions, online campaigns and public meetings; through getting the issue into the national media; through taking to the streets en masse for the action day; through getting other organisations and political parties to join the campaign through a statement calling for DESO's closure; and through educating two-thirds of MPs through postcards, letters and face-to-face lobbying. All of this important work raised vital public awareness of DESO's existence and made it harder for the Government to justify spending public money on it.

## Not over

Of course it is not over yet – we need to keep an eye on what follows DESO and continue to campaign for an end to all Government subsidies and support for the arms trade – but the demise of DESO is an achievement that should not be underestimated. And it wouldn't have happened without the efforts of all the many individuals and organisations who have, over the years, held DESO up to public scrutiny. Despite the massive counter-lobby of arms companies, we've won!

Thanks and well done to all those who played a part in the campaign.

## Campaign highlights

**November 1975** Well-attended daily lunchtime vigil outside DSO (as it was then called), supported by CAAT sponsoring organisations including Pax Christi, Fellowship of Reconciliation and United Nations Association, as well as Christian Aid, Oxfam and War on Want.

**January 1977** Week of action – '10 years of Death Sales, 10 years of DSO'. 12–50 people protesting outside office everyday.

**December 1981** Launch of 'Close the DSO Campaign' outside offices.

**1982** Daily picket for a week in June. Supporters writing to MPs to call for DSO's closure.

**1983–4** Questions about DSO for parliamentary candidates; another vigil at the offices in September 1983 to coincide with the Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition; London Christian Peace Group hold monthly vigils.

**1986** Labour Conference resolution to close DESO (though Shadow Defence Secretary couldn't see it being



# CLOSER TO ARMS TRADE

'immediately abolished'); DESO official refers to CAAT's regular vigil outside its offices at a trade meeting.

**1987-8** Quakers begin morning vigil outside offices; campaign against British Army Equipment Exhibition launched outside DESO; model resolution for constituency parties includes clause about closing DESO.

**1990-3** CAAT focuses on DESO campaign; 18,500 petition signatures handed in to Ministry of Defence; protest outside DESO with model bombs put into dustbins; Early Day Motion tabled in Parliament and supporters write to MPs; weekly vigils by Fellowship of Reconciliation starting in 1991 and still going in (at least) 1993; CAAT working to ensure DESO is a focus for Labour and Liberal Democrat conferences.

**1995** Protest at the DESO Symposium.

**2002-4** CAAT's 'Fanning the Flames' campaign and subsidies work call for DESO's closure; local campaigners raise awareness around the UK; 40 people attend rally at DESO offices and hand 6,167 petition signatures and 1,015 postcards to the Prime Minister.

**2005** Launch of 'Who calls the Shots' report focusing on the relationship between the government and arms industry; CAAT 'Call the Shots' campaign launched outside DESO symposium; supporters writing to MPs to ask what they think about DESO; DSEi protest and conferences focus on DESO's involvement in organising the arms fair.

**March 2006** 'Shut DESO' campaign launched with protest and press stunt at DESO's annual symposium; pack produced for local campaigners to take action in their areas; statement calling for DESO's closure gains wide support from over 30 organisations, plus political parties (Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru, the Green Party and Social Democratic and Labour Party), MPs, Church leaders and other prominent figures.

**May-July 2006** Protest at BAE Systems AGM to highlight support the company gets from DESO; EDM tabled based on CAAT's Close DESO statement; CAAT's Stop the Arms Trade Week and Christian Network Day of Prayer focus on DESO – stalls, services and campaign days occur around the UK; protests at Farnborough arms fair focus on DESO involvement.

**Sept-Dec 2006** Mass lobby of MPs in their local constituencies; 250 people encircle DESO on October's action day to designate it a global danger zone; thousands of copies of spoof newspaper *Holborn & Bloomsbury Messenger* are distributed to residents and

workers in area surrounding DESO's offices; viral emails and other online campaigning help to spread the word about DESO.

**Jan-Mar 2007** Lobby of MPs extended due to its success; 80 MPs lobbied in person, many hearing for the first time what DESO does; in total more than 1,200 Shut DESO postcards were sent to MPs, and the same number to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and over 400 MPs received postcards from constituents.

**7 March 2007** Protest to coincide with DESO's symposium – 10,000 Shut DESO petition signatures are handed in to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury; the *Daily Telegraph* runs a large feature headed 'The Secret Organisation' in which City Correspondent Katherine Griffiths writes about DESO's work and its lack of transparency.

**June 2007** Representatives from CAAT, FoR and SPEAK meet with Treasury Minister Stephen Timms to discuss DESO.

**9 July 2007** *The Guardian's* Rob Evans reports that leaked Treasury documents suggest that DESO will be closed.

**25 July 2007** Prime Minister Gordon Brown announces DESO will close by the end of 2007.

**28 July 2007** The *Daily Telegraph* reports how angry the arms industry is at the decision to close DESO and the *Telegraph* website publishes 'furious' letter from Mike Turner, Chief Executive of BAE Systems, to Gordon Brown demanding a meeting about it.

**22 August 2007** Around 70 people attend CAAT's party to celebrate DESO's closure. BECCIE D'CUNHA

## What is DESO?

The Defence Export Services Organisation employs nearly 500 civil servants to sell arms worldwide and to lobby for military exports across government. DESO has sold weapons to conflict zones, human rights abusers and countries with desperate development needs. DESO's official website boasts that over 75 per cent of arms export orders would not have been achieved without its assistance. This makes DESO's closure a momentous campaign success – we have struck at the heart of the arms trade.

# THE LAST DSEi?

## Anna Jones asks whether the arms fair is finished

In the last issue of *CAATnews* we reported that CAAT's campaign to persuade Reed Elsevier to stop organising arms fairs had been won – Reed Elsevier announced in June that it is to sell its five international arms fairs, including DSEi, by the end of 2007. We've since had the fantastic news that DESO (the Defence Export Services Organisation), the Government department which promotes sales for private arms companies and is heavily involved in the organisation of DSEi, is to be closed by the end of 2007. This year's DSEi arms fair went ahead last month, still under Reed and supported by DESO and once again typified all that's wrong with the arms trade. But the recent change in atmosphere in which business and the Government are distancing themselves from the arms trade means that there is very real hope that the future of the fair is in serious jeopardy.

DSEi opened its doors on Tuesday 11 September. Coinciding with the anniversary of the attacks on New York and Washington didn't stop over a thousand companies present from starting four days of the hard sell on a range of weaponry described by the *Telegraph* as 'capable of unspeakable damage'. BAE Systems was one of the biggest companies present and, once again, the UK government invited known human rights abusing regimes to attend the event. These included the governments of China, Libya, Colombia and Saudi Arabia. Cruise missiles, tanks, warships, and small arms were all being aggressively promoted in a borough that experienced some of the worst bombing in World War II, and where gun-grime has become a serious issue in recent years,

disproportionately affecting young people.

The organisers tried hard to suggest that this year's DSEi had a focus on softer 'force protection' rather than offensive weaponry. They made a point of throwing out a Chinese company for allegedly promoting torture equipment (illegal under the 2002 Export Control Act). But this seemed like something of a charade since no-one batted an eyelid over cabinets of missiles, grenades and guns, marketed using slogans like 'greatly enhanced lethality' and 'increased kill probability', and Raytheon was allowed to openly showcase its new heat-ray gun which causes an intense burning sensation that the company themselves describe as 'intolerable'.

A range of politicians, community leaders, local residents and faith groups spoke out against the fair, insisting that this must be the last year that DSEi takes place. Their calls were echoed by hundreds of people who joined peaceful protests organised by CAAT and other groups and took direct action before and during the week of the fair.

### Action against DSEi

Campaigners took action in advance of the event with a weapons inspection at an arms company in Norwich by Norfolk Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Army recruitment adverts subverted in Oxford, a picket of a defence conference in Central London and an action at AWE Aldermaston.

A multi-faith vigil on the eve of the fair, remembering all the victims of the arms trade, was organised by local faith groups and supported by East London Against the Arms Fair (ELAAF) and CAAT's Christian Network. Over 80 people gathered at the steps of the ExCeL centre in London's Docklands where the arms fair takes place. They ranged from

Baptists to Buddhists, Muslims to Quakers, Hindus to Franciscan monks. All united in silent prayer and protest, demonstrating by their unity the realistic hope of a world without the arms trade.

On the first day of the arms fair, over 200 people joined CAAT's peaceful demonstration through Newham. Speakers after the colourful procession included comedian Mark Thomas, local resident Bill Perry and principal spokesperson for the Green Party, Sian Berry. The demonstration was joined by around 60 cyclists who took part in a Critical Mass protest bike ride from Central London. Later in the day a solidarity protest took place at the offices of BAE Systems in Manchester and two people were arrested after they lay down on the ramparts of the arms fair venue, portraying dead bodies. Another person was arrested for simply handing leaflets to arms fair delegates in the station next to the venue.

The Space Hijackers, a group that employs humour and street-theatre to get a serious message across, managed to get a tank and sound system to the main entrance of ExCeL. They auctioned off the tank and invited the 200-strong crowd to a party against the arms fair to let the fair's delegates know what they think about their murderous business. On Thursday evening, an elite group of arms dealers attended an official DSEi dinner at the Dorchester Hotel. A heavily policed but noisy picket took place outside, whilst a Critical Mass ride of about 50 cyclists was prevented from reaching the hotel. Earlier in the day, the Princess of Wales fountain was dyed blood-red to commemorate victims of cluster bombs, and a pensioner held a protest outside Downing Street.

**“I don’t believe that holding the Defence Systems and Equipment International Exhibition (DSEi) in London is in the interests of Londoners or the UK. I do not agree with it being held here and would rather it didn’t come here, particularly when so many of those attending have a history of human rights abuse. It is completely unacceptable that Londoners have to cover the costs of policing this event”**

MAYOR OF LONDON, KEN LIVINGSTONE

### What next for DSEi?

The DSEi arms fair is booked to return to the ExCeL centre in 2009 and 2011. The campaign to close DSEi, despite recent successes, is certainly not over. As always, CAAT will be watching the situation very carefully over the coming months and time will tell whether Reed Elsevier manages to find a buyer for its arms fairs. But the changes in recent months have led many to question the future of DSEi and many are likening buying an arms fair in this climate to buying a dairy farm in the middle of the foot-and-mouth outbreak. CAAT will continue to lead the campaign for an end to DSEi towards an end to the arms trade. We will make sure you can join us in taking the next steps in getting to those goals. Watch this space.

ANNA JONES

**“We’re all too familiar with images of lives destroyed by these weapons in places like Iraq and Darfur. But let’s not forget that the gun crime that destroys so many lives in this country is an inevitable side effect of the arms trade. Londoners have a right to expect that young lives are put before arms dealers’ profits”**

GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF LONDON,  
SIAN BERRY

**“ExCel is in my diocese and I joined this demonstration [against DSEi] to draw attention to the fact that the UK is still a major exporter of arms”**

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP THOMAS MCMAHON, IN  
WHOSE DIOCESE DSEI TAKES PLACE



This year’s protests against the DSEi arms fair CAAT

**“We know that having a fair that promotes the use of guns and violence isn’t what we want on our doorstep. Following the recent shootings across London, we need the Council to be taking steps to reduce gun crime, not allowing a large arms fair to promote gun use. We hope that this will be the last arms fair in Newham”**

NEWHAM BOROUGH COUNCILLOR ALAN CRAIG  
(CHRISTIAN PEOPLE’S ALLIANCE), IN WHOSE WARD DSEI  
TAKES PLACE

**“[DSEi is] immoral, providing an opportunity for some of the world’s most dictatorial and regressive regimes to come to Newham to buy weaponry that may be used against their own people”**

NEWHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

**“I condemn this event that is encouraging arms sales in our country and I suggest to all civilised people of the world that we abandon the greedy nature of involving ourselves in arms selling, which leads to senseless bloodshed”**

PROMINENT MUSLIM COMMENTATOR IMAM ABDULJALIL  
SAJID, CHAIR OF RELIGIONS FOR PEACE

**“The multitude of arms dealers gathered from around the world to flog guns, bombs and the other wherewithal to take human life while Londoners pay a £4 million police bill to protect the arms dealers from peace protesters makes DSEi’s presence in London unacceptable and unwelcome”**

WRITER AND COMEDIAN MARK THOMAS

# Mercenaries

The spotlight was turned onto private military and security companies, also known as 'corporate mercenaries', when employees of the US-based Blackwater opened fire on Iraqi civilians in Baghdad on 16 September. At least eleven people were killed and many others were injured. Blackwater's employees were immediately ordered out of the country by the Iraqi authorities and the company's licence was revoked. However, following protests by the US, it is unclear whether this will be followed through.

This appalling event has highlighted the importance of bringing the world's private armies under control. The 'corporate mercenary' industry is large and growing. There are, for instance, more employees of private military companies in Iraq than there are members of the UK armed forces. According to the *Independent*, the private military industry is valued at \$120 billion. Its employees are involved in all sorts of tasks that were once the province of members of national armed forces, yet the industry is unregulated and the legal status of individuals concerned is uncertain.



**A man wounded in the attack by Blackwater grimaces in hospital**

As reported in the last *CAATnews*, CAAT, Amnesty UK and War on Want have produced a postcard asking the Foreign Secretary to move towards legislation to regulate private military and security companies. Copies of the postcard are available, free of charge, from the CAAT office, as is a briefing titled *Corporate Mercenaries*, written by War on Want and endorsed by CAAT. You can place orders by emailing [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk) or phoning 020 7281 0297. ANN FELTHAM

# Census Alert

The process of running the 2011 Census will be contracted out by the Office of National Statistics to a private company. One of the two contractors in the final round of selection is the arms company Lockheed Martin, 80 per cent of whose business is with the US Department of Defense and other Federal Government agencies.

As well as producing a wide range of weaponry, Lockheed Martin also focuses on intelligence and surveillance work and boasts of its ability to provide 'integrated threat information' that combines information from many different



sources. Information contained in census responses could be very useful to the company's intelligence work, raising the question: will our personal data be safe?

CAAT has put its name to Census Alert, which is supported by the Green Party as well as politicians from Plaid Cymru and Labour, and is campaigning to stop Lockheed Martin from being given the contract. If you want to know more, see the website at [www.censusalert.org.uk](http://www.censusalert.org.uk) (sorry, no postal address). ANN FELTHAM

# CAAT National Gathering 2007

**Saturday 24 November 10am-6pm**

**South Camden Community College, Charrington Street, London, NW1 1RG (nearest tube stations: Mornington Crescent, Euston or King's Cross)**

This has been one of the busiest and most successful years for CAAT and we need your help to make next year even better. Join other CAAT supporters at CAAT's annual conference to discuss the issues, learn new skills and look forward to the campaign ahead.

The focus will be on our Control BAE campaign and CAAT's ongoing work to end government support for the arms trade. With keynote speakers, this will be a great opportunity to share perspectives and discuss anti-arms trade campaigning. Whether you're new to arms trade issues or a long-time campaigner we will have a range of sessions to suit you. The day will help you become better informed about the arms trade, CAAT's campaigns and the actions you can take. It will also offer a chance to develop your skills and meet other CAAT supporters.

The day is free and includes a vegetarian lunch. You can book your place online simply by filling in the form on our website – see [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk). Alternatively, please contact Anna at the office: [anna@caat.org.uk](mailto:anna@caat.org.uk) or 020 7281 0297. ANNA JONES

# Bribing for Britain

**Ian Prichard introduces a new CAAT publication, *Bribing for Britain*, describing Government collusion in arms sales corruption**

The ending of the Serious Fraud Office investigation into BAE Systems' deals with Saudi Arabia forced the arms trade out of the shadows and directly in the spotlight. The seedy nature of the glossy, FTSE-100, government-supported arms trade has become glaringly apparent. Stories about BAE have emerged from many, often unexpected, sources, attracting a great deal of media interest. Even CAAT's protest at the company's Annual General Meeting resulted in something approaching a press scrum.

## Context

The range of elements to the story has, at times, been confusing and the wider context lacking. CAAT's new booklet provides this context and, with it, clarity. Written by Tim Webb (see the box on this page), the booklet brings together the major events and players, along with the necessary background and analysis in one accessible, highly readable account. It is rooted in personal knowledge from the author's work as a senior trade union official dealing with arms companies. The booklet covers DESO, the government's attitude to bribery and corruption, New Labour and its backing of the arms trade, the nature of the Saudi Arabian regime and its arms dealing and corruption, the Serious Fraud Office investigation of BAE's arms deals with Saudi Arabia, the termination of the investigation and the continuing investigations into BAE deals with other countries and, of course, analysis of BAE itself.



**Tim Webb**

## Myths exposed

The myth that the UK only recently and reluctantly engaged in dubious practices is examined and exposed. Allegations of corruption as part of official arms export policy have been made ever since a Labour government formed DESO in 1966. Continuing Serious Fraud Office investigations into arms deals with a number of other countries including Romania, Chile and Tanzania threaten to unveil some of the mechanics of the process. Apologists may attempt to justify bribery on the

grounds that if we don't do it, other countries (particularly the French) will. The booklet shows how Britain, unlike France, has refused to comply with international anti-corruption agreements.

Through this analysis of corruption, *Bribing for Britain* brings together most of the core elements of the UK arms trade and, as such, CAAT's campaigns. The booklet is available to order via the website [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk) or by phoning the CAAT office on 020 7281 0297.

IAN PRICHARD

## Tim Webb

Tim Webb is a former Assistant General Secretary of the trade union Manufacturing, Science, Finance (now Unite). He dealt with the main arms companies for 25 years, particularly those in the aerospace and electronics sectors. He was a member of the Engineering Training Authority and chairman of the Electronics and Employment Task Force at the National Economic Development Office (NEDO). Webb also served in the British Army for three years. During this time he was posted to various bases in Africa and the Middle East, including the Gulf.

His book, *The Armour-Plated Ostrich – The Hidden Costs of Britain's Addiction to the Arms Business*, was published in 1998.

# Fundraising



**Mark Thomas** ALASTAIR RAE

So far 2007 has been a phenomenal year for CAAT and we have taken hugely important steps in our long-term campaign. We'd like to take this opportunity to say a huge thanks to everyone who has donated money or raised funds for our work. Without this we wouldn't have been able to achieve so much. Your donations remain vitally important and will enable us to take the next steps towards ending the arms trade, so please give what you can.

CAAT greetings cards have just gone on sale (see advertisement on the opposite page and see the card inserted in this issue of *CAATnews*). The insides of the cards are blank for your own message and there is also information about CAAT on the reverse of the card. The cards cost £5.50 for 10, which includes postage and packing. Some cards are also still available with last year's design if you prefer that.

You can also sponsor our Great South Runners (see below).

## Great South Run

This year there will be a team of three CAAT runners in the Great South Run in Portsmouth. These are Rebecca Tully, Grace Drewell and Liam Scott, who have all signed up to run ten miles on Sunday 28 October and raise money for the campaign. You can provide support and encouragement by sponsoring them at <http://www.bmycharity.com/caatgreatsouthrun>. If you are in Portsmouth why not go along and help cheer them on?

One of the runners, Liam Scott, said: 'I really wanted to take part in one of the great runs this year and after reading Mark Thomas' book *Underground Adventures in the Arms & Torture Trade* and seeing the recent successes CAAT has had, I felt I had to contribute towards the

fantastic work the campaign does. Winning the event for CAAT would certainly raise some awareness but in reality I'll be happy to make it across the finish line!'

## Comedy - seriously funny

Mark Thomas as host has just proved that it is possible to attract the masses with a benefit gig in support of CAAT and The Corner House's legal challenge to get the Serious Fraud Office investigation reopened. On a Sunday night in September, the audience filled the huge auditorium of the Hammersmith Apollo, eager to see some of the UK's best stand-up comedians giving their time and jokes for free. They were certainly not disappointed. Jo Caulfield, Simon Amstell, Ed Byrne, Josie Long, Mark Steel, Omid Djalili, Mark Thomas, Robin Ince, Stewart Lee, Russell Brand, MC Phil Nichol and special guest Bill Bailey did not just go for smiles, grins and chuckles, but made the air vibrate with roaring laughter.

It would have been easy to forget about the more serious background to the gig, had it not been for Nick Hildyard of The Corner House. In his impressive address, he explained what is at stake, urged people to send a Control BAE postcard to their MP and announced that over £40,000 was raised by the event. He more than earned the subsequent standing ovation.

The event was a success and might even prove a milestone in CAAT's Control BAE campaign. Many had not just come for entertainment, but picked up or signed a Control BAE postcard, carefully read the programme put together by CAAT and The Corner House and/or asked for more information at the three stalls run by CAAT in the foyer. The credit goes to Mark Thomas, the comedians, and everybody who helped to make this event happen.

# Campaign Against Arms Trade thrives on your participation

**For more information on all of these contact the CAAT office on 020 7281 0297 or if you have any enquiries not covered below contact [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk)**

## Subscribe to a CAAT email list

Sign up to receive the monthly CAAT bulletin with the latest news and events; to receive press releases; to join the list for the CAAT Action Network and find out about nonviolent direct action to stop the arms trade; or to find out when the latest *CAATnews* is on the website. Contact [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk) or visit [www.caat.org.uk/lists](http://www.caat.org.uk/lists)

## Make a donation

The donations of our supporters enable CAAT to struggle for a world without arms trading; without your help there would be no campaign. Support CAAT by sending us a cheque, setting up a regular standing order donation, or by taking part in a fundraising event. Contact CAAT at [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk)

## Contact your MP

It is estimated that every letter written to a politician represents about 80 people who care but haven't got around to writing. If you would like to visit or write to your MP, contact the CAAT office to find out if your MP has shown an interest in arms trade issues.

On some issues it is also worth contacting your MEP. If you live in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, you can also raise issues that have an impact on employment or the economy with your national representatives. Contact Ann at [ann@caat.org.uk](mailto:ann@caat.org.uk)

## Campaign locally

CAAT has a network of local contacts and groups around the UK who take responsibility for promoting anti-arms trade activity and the work of CAAT in their area. Get in contact if you would like to know what is happening in your area or if you are interested in becoming a local contact or setting up a group. All that's needed is a willingness to raise awareness of arms trade issues in any way that you feel is appropriate. Contact Beccie at [beccie@caat.org.uk](mailto:beccie@caat.org.uk) for info, including the Local Campaigns Pack.

## Raise awareness

Organising a public meeting, using the local media and running a street stall have proved effective ways for CAAT groups to raise awareness of arms trade issues. CAAT can provide speakers for public meetings, materials for stalls and can also help with publicity. Contact Anna at [action@caat.org.uk](mailto:action@caat.org.uk) or Beccie at [beccie@caat.org.uk](mailto:beccie@caat.org.uk). For media info contact Symon at [press@caat.org.uk](mailto:press@caat.org.uk)

## Research the arms companies

CAAT has produced a range of research on the UK's main arms companies. However, staff at the CAAT office are not able to track all arms company developments and would appreciate receiving any information you find. This can include anything from watching out for information in your local press, to undertaking basic research in your local library, to approaching a company directly for information. Contact Ian at [ian@caat.org.uk](mailto:ian@caat.org.uk)

## Protest against the arms trade

A protest can confront the arms trade and illustrate that many people do not think that the arms trade is an ordinary, acceptable business. In addition, a protest can generate a lot of publicity, which will raise awareness about the company and the arms trade in general. CAAT is a non-violent organisation and any protest organised under the name of CAAT needs to be non-violent (contact the office for the CAAT guidelines). Contact Anna at [action@caat.org.uk](mailto:action@caat.org.uk)

## Join the CAAT Christian Network

The Network raises arms trade issues within national church structures and local churches. Contact Alun Morinan at [christian@caat.org.uk](mailto:christian@caat.org.uk)

## Order a CAAT publication

CAAT produces briefings, reports and leaflets on a range of issues. Contact CAAT at [enquiries@caat.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@caat.org.uk)

## CAAT greeting cards

New CAAT greetings cards are on sale and last year's card is still available.

The inside of the cards are blank for your own message and information about CAAT is on the reverse, so you can raise awareness and show support for the campaign.



£5.50 for 10 cards with envelopes (£5 + £50p postage & packing).

Order by sending a cheque payable to CAAT to the office, or buy at [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk)



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Please pay: The Co-operative Bank Plc, 1 Islington High Street, London, N1 9TR (sort code 08 90 33) for the account of CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE (account number 50503544) the sum of

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Signed

Fill in your name and address with the bankers order and return the whole form to CAAT, not your bank. Please make cheques payable to CAAT and send with this form to: CAAT, Freepost, LON6486, London N4 3BR.

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# Campaigns diary

## 30 October

Control BAE peaceful protest. Protest at the visit to the UK of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. See page 6.

## 24 November

CAAT National Gathering 2007. See page 12.

## November

Control BAE speaking tour. See page 7.

## Weekly

Noise demos at EDO MBM. Every Wednesday 4-6pm at EDO MBM, Home Farm Business Park, Home Farm Road, Mouslecoomb, Brighton. Come and make some noise outside EDO MBM, a Brighton based company manufacturing electrical weapons components. For more information see [www.smashedo.org.uk](http://www.smashedo.org.uk)

## Monthly

East London Against the Arms Fair meeting on the second Monday each month, 7.30pm, the Garden Cafe, 7 Cundy Road, London E16. Contact ELAAF, c/o CIU, Durning Hall, Earlam Grove, London E7 or call 020 7474 5257

CAAT London Group Meeting. For details, please contact Robin Yu at [londoncaat@riseup.net](mailto:londoncaat@riseup.net)

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Website: [www.caat.org.uk](http://www.caat.org.uk)

