



# PEOPLE NOT WAR



 CAMPAIGN  
AGAINST  
ARMS  
TRADE

*Letty Wilson - cover designer*

“The magnitude of issues like police violence, environmental crisis, and systemic racism can feel too big to grasp, and certainly to depict in one image. It often feels like the world is falling apart around us, but I wanted to foreground resistance and the many people fighting to make things better. I talked to friends who have been at protests in the US as well as researching climate justice and the increasing use of border politics to direct anger away from our own UK government and toward people trying to find refuge from conflicts the UK is in large part complicit in. One factor that came up over and over is the legacy of colonial violence in so many of these issues – in police brutality and racism, in forest fires burning unchecked, in the disproportionate impact climate change and COVID 19 has and will have on the most vulnerable parts of society – and in the defensive anger of many in the UK at the suggestion that we may be accountable for any of this. I wanted to make an image that reflected these hierarchies of power, and also showed the urgency of what protestors and activists are speaking about, combining imagery of forest fires and tear gas grenades, protestors and burning trees to try and reflect both the crisis and the strength of resistance. Forest fire can be devastating, but in properly managed forest it is a natural agent of change, and the flames make way for new growth.”



For months, the air has been thick with grief. Amidst a global pandemic there has also been a tectonic shift in the pyramids of power, as the scales finally fall from the eyes of the privileged, who for too long have been complicit in the everyday oppression of so many.

To demand that Black Lives Matter is to demand humanity wake up from its complicit apathy. You do not have to be an operative of the state to have your knee on the neck of Black and Brown people everywhere.

And when we say People Not War, we mean people over profit, over hyper-capitalist pursuits and gains that oppress and kill. We mean prioritise our lives over looting the earth and its resources, over exploiting workers, the marginalised, those living in Global South countries. We mean understanding the biggest threat to security in this lifetime will be climate chaos if we continue on this trajectory, not migrants braving perilous journeys, leaving their lives behind, to find safety in countries responsible for the destruction of their own homes.

It is vital that the arms trade is not understood in isolation of other intersecting issues as, in the words of Audre Lorde, “There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.” The struggle against the arms trade must be anti-racist, anti-capitalist, antipatriarchal, pro environmental justice and actively centring those most directly affected by its devastating consequences. This is the work we are doing more of at CAAT through Reading Groups, events, working groups, trainings, podcasts, and resources like this zine. We must be eloquent in drawing these links

**// WE NEED TRUE COMRADES, FIERCE AND READY AND WILLING TO TAKE RISKS AND MAKE SACRIFICES FOR THE JUST WORLD WE DESERVE //**

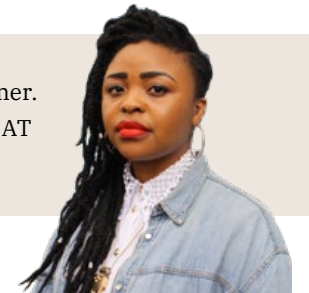
and clear in our understanding of how each operates within the systems of oppression we are fighting against.

For this updated version of People Not War, I'm pleased to have commissioned Letty Wilson, an illustrator and artist originally from the Highlands of Scotland, now living in Glasgow. In Letty's own words, it is the 'monstrous and the biological' that is the focus of the work she chooses to create. And what is more monstrous than all we endure in a world of weapons?

So this time - read the zine, enjoy it, share it with others and then feel compelled to take action in a way you've never felt compelled before. It's not enough to simply call yourself an 'ally'. I have learnt that's a passive word, fraught at best. What we need more of now more than ever are active accomplices and co-conspirators. This struggle is a long one - stamina is needed.

We need true comrades, fierce and ready and willing to take risks and make sacrifices for the just world we deserve.

Siana Bangura is a writer, producer and campaigner. She is the Training and Events co-ordinator at CAAT and is the editor of 'People Not War' zine.



# HOW THE ARMS TRADE WORKS

Wherever there is war and conflict there will always be arms dealers trying to take advantage of it. Arms companies produce weapons which are sold around the world. None of this could happen without the complicity and support of governments that do everything they can to maximise sales.

The UK government is one of the biggest arms dealers in the world. Every year it approves arms sales to human rights abusing regimes around the world. Some of its arms go to armies, while others go to repressive police forces.

There is no such thing as arms control in a conflict zone. Once weapons have been sold there is no way of knowing what abuses they will be used in.

Right now, UK-made weapons are doing a huge amount of damage. Nowhere is this clearer than in Yemen, where Saudi forces are flying UK-made fighter jets and dropping UK-made bombs and firing UK-made missiles.

The forces that buy UK-made arms know that they are not just buying the weapons. They are buying the political support that goes with it. They are also buying silence. As John Deverell, the former director of defence diplomacy at the MoD told the Guardian “We are worried that if we do speak truth to power, we will endanger the commercial relationship.”

The arms being sold today could be used in atrocities and abuses for years to come.



The arms industry is a multi-billion pound industry that sees weapons transferred across the world. These statistics from our friends at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) show the scale of the arms trade.

## \$95 bn

SIPRI estimates that the total value of the global arms trade in 2017 was at least \$95 billion

## One Billion

The Small Arms Survey estimates that there are more than one billion firearms in the world. The vast majority of which are in civilian hands

## 36%

US accounted for 36% of world military spending in 2018

## \$398.2 bn

The top 100 arms companies made an estimated \$398.2 billion worth of sales in 2017

## 2,436,351 people

2,436,351 people have died in armed conflicts since 1989 – with over 77320 in 2018 – according to the Uppsala Conflict Data Program

Every year the UK Government publishes an annual report about the size of the UK arms industry, these statistics all come from its 2018/19 report.

## \$120 bn

From 2009–18, the UK approved over \$120 bn worth of arms sales and contracts, making it the world's second biggest arms dealer

## \$115 bn

From 2009–18 the largest buyer of weapons in the world was the Saudi Arabian regime, with \$115 bn worth of deals

## 60%

The UK arms industry is dominated by sales to the Middle East, with 60% of sales from 2009–18 going to the region. These weapons have fueled conflict in Yemen and beyond

# THE IMPACT OF THE ARMS TRADE AND COVID ON YEMEN

**This piece is by our friends at Mwatana, a human rights monitoring group based in Yemen. Since 2015, Saudi-led forces have inflicted a brutal bombardment on Yemen. UK-made fighter jets have played a central role in that bombing.**

COVID has killed thousands of innocent people, infected hundreds of thousands, and sowed agony and sorrow in the hearts of victims' families, friends, and loved ones. It has squeezed medical teams and staff with a huge number of cases that are beyond their capacity. It has closed schools and hit the economy.

Over recent months, people in different nations and with different languages, beliefs have demonstrated a remarkable sense of solidarity and unity in combating COVID. Across the world we have seen calls for governments to reconsider their policies and change their priorities. We, in Yemen, share your feelings, solidarity, demands and aspirations for a better human life.

With our full solidarity and prayers for humanity, we remind you that the war in Yemen has caused as many tragedies to the Yemeni people as this virus did to the world.

This war has been made worse by the complicity of the governments and administrations that have manufactured and exported weapons to the parties to the war. These weapons have stormed the lives of civilians, with homes, markets, wedding parties all being bombed.

We value any solidarity against the war in Yemen and all other wars. It is vital that we redouble our efforts and raise awareness about the threats that are killing people and threatening our lives, safety, and security. This applies to weapons as well as viruses.



# POLICING AND THE ARMS TRADE

The murder of George Floyd in May 2020 was the catalyst for protests that sent shockwaves across the globe. In response to the righteous anger of protesters, Trump deemed it appropriate to send in the National Guard and militarised police to quell the political dissent. Scenes of tear gas and rubber bullets being used against protesters and journalists horrified the public and the British government has been urged to suspend the sales of British tear gas amid fears they are the same supplies being used to inflict violence on civil rights protesters.

Government records show it has granted export licences worth millions of pounds for the sale of anti-crowd gas, riot equipment, so-called “rubber bullets” and other small arms to the US – but the government’s own rules say such exports should not go ahead where they are likely to be used for “internal repression”. In this second wave of Black Lives Matter protests, it is crystal clear that state violence is the same whether it is carried out by the military or the police. The line between the two has always been blurred - both mired in colonialism - and, via equipment, tactics and the principles that dictate “policing”, the blur continues. Policing is a means to control the people and war is a way to police the world’s people and resources.

The links between the so-called ‘security’ industry and domestic oppression have always been - and continue to be - strong. Willingly ignoring this blurred line is a central facet of UK foreign policy. Increasingly authoritarian methods of policing being used in the UK, USA and other parts of the world remind us that calls for abolition of the police and the prison industrial complex in the UK are sister-demands to calls for abolition of the global military industrial complex. With the global market



**// THE LINKS BETWEEN THE SO-CALLED ‘SECURITY’ INDUSTRY AND DOMESTIC OPPRESSION HAVE ALWAYS BEEN STRONG //**



**// A CRITICAL AWARENESS OF THE LINKS BETWEEN OTHER FORMS OF INJUSTICE IS PIVOTAL //**

for non-lethal weaponry being predicted to be worth at least 10.2 billion dollars by 2025, circuses such as the Security & Policing Arms Fair, which takes place every March in Farnborough, will need to be disrupted and the true extent of state violence will need to continue to be exposed in order to be challenged. The 2020 edition of the fair, which took place just before lockdown, saw delegations from 64 countries being invited, including Algeria, Bahrain, Brunei, Egypt, India, Israel, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the UAE. Many of the regimes in attendance are listed as ‘human rights priority countries’ by the UK Foreign Office.

A critical awareness of the links between other forms of injustice is pivotal to our work at CAAT. We must reassess our understandings of ‘security’ and ‘surveillance’ and connect the dots between policing as a form of state violence and exertion of control, and war and militarism as continuations of colonialism; issues such as climate crisis being connected to militarised borders and racism and the recent Covid-19 pandemic being another axes of our struggle, particularly when arms companies still find ways to profit in such a crisis.

Whether it be through policing, detention, borders or drones, we must resist the arms industry in its entirety.



# BORDERS AND THE ARMS TRADE

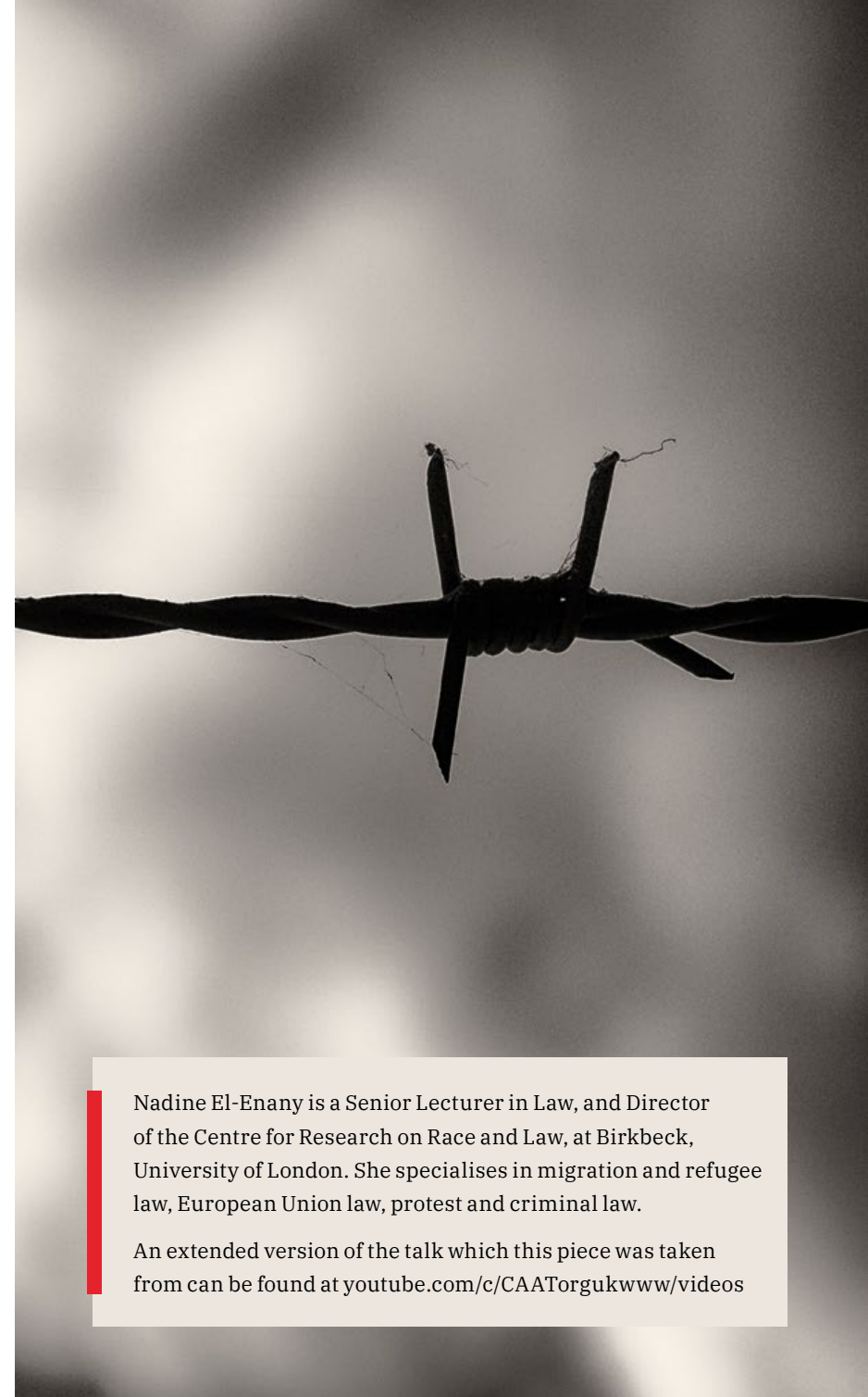
If Britain's colonial history and that of its recent imperial invasions were to be put front and centre in our analysis of migration and its control, Britain would not be understood as a bordered sovereign nation-state, but as an active colonial space in which racialised people in and outside its borders, continue to be made subject to the most brutal forms of state terror.

In Britain, the post-Brexit political landscape is particularly hostile to migrants or anyone perceived to be a migrant. In reality, Britain is an ongoing colonial space in which its colonial spoils are guarded and withheld from the people from whom they were stolen in the course of centuries of colonialism and dispossession.

Britain would not be the wealthy, plentiful place that it is without its colonial history. In 1833, Britain abolished slavery only to raise the equivalent of £17 billion in compensation to be paid to slave-owners for the loss of their 'property'. The compensation scheme was the largest state-sponsored pay-out in British history until it was superseded by the bank bailouts of 2008.

Immigration law is not the seemingly 'harsh but fair' mode through which the 'deserving' are separated from the 'undeserving'. Instead, it is a crucial mechanism for ensuring that colonial wealth remains out of the hands of those from whom it was stolen.

We, as critical scholars and activists, must challenge the narratives that underpin immigration law and borders. We must build one which rejects the violence of legal categorisation and paves the way for a more empowering, re-distributive and radical politics of racial justice. Only that way can we begin to work our way towards new strategies for organising collectively in the service of anti-racism and migrant solidarity.



Nadine El-Enany is a Senior Lecturer in Law, and Director of the Centre for Research on Race and Law, at Birkbeck, University of London. She specialises in migration and refugee law, European Union law, protest and criminal law.

An extended version of the talk which this piece was taken from can be found at [youtube.com/c/CAATorgukwww/videos](https://www.youtube.com/c/CAATorgukwww/videos)



Over the last 12 months, in the UK we have seen the most incredible momentum around climate resistance. From the youth strikers, to the first time activists joining the ranks of Extinction Rebellion, to the policy makers and campaigners pushing for a Green New Deal, it's all hands on deck.

Yet, many of us have noted a severe lack of understanding of the need for an internationalist perspective, not merely for the sake of solidarity or even reparations, but for the sake of survival. There has been a total silence around the role of the military-industrial complex and wars in climate chaos.

We know that wars have been created to serve the interests of corporations: the largest arms deals have delivered oil; whilst the world's largest militaries are the biggest users of petrol. And of course in the aftermath of wars and conflict,

we see people fleeing conditions they did not create, only to be met with violent borders and the hostile environment.

A greener economy in Britain will achieve very little if the government continues to hinder vulnerable countries from doing the same through crippling debt, unfair trade deals, and the export of its own deathly extractive industries.

The fight for climate justice is the fight of our lives, and we need to do it right. We cannot afford to be silent on the role of the military industrial complex in contributing to climate chaos. Any action for climate justice **MUST** tackle militarism and global inequality, otherwise our calls for action are empty.

Alexandra Wanjiku Kelbert and Joshua Virasami are members of Wretched of the Earth, a grassroots collective for Indigenous, black, brown and diaspora groups.

# THE IMPACT OF THE ARMS TRADE: WAR AND HEALTH



Samah Jabr, chair of the mental health unit at the Palestinian Ministry of Health, made this powerful point in an interview about mental health in Palestine. She describes “normal reactions” to the destruction of a person’s house by bombing and living under constant threat of further bombardment - arguing that there is no “post” about the traumatic stress that many Palestinians experience as a result of Israel’s military violence and occupation.

The situation in Palestine is just one reason why Medact opposes the arms trade. People across the world, and disproportionately in the Global South, face death, injury and health crises as a result of war and conflict fuelled by the arms trade. We take action as an organisation which believes the best approach to prevention of health inequalities is to tackle their root causes, in a landscape in which the health

impacts and injustices of armed conflict are very clear. Health crises such as the outbreak of cholera in Yemen do not come from nowhere - they are caused by the destruction of public health and sanitation systems as a result of war.

Health workers are often the first respondents after bombings in situations of armed conflict, and are sometimes even targeted by repressive regimes. As such, health workers in the UK feel it is their duty to show solidarity with their colleagues around the world. Challenging against the arms trade is an important and necessary way of doing that.

Reem Abu-Hyyeh is the Peace & Security Campaigner at public health organisation Medact.

# THE ARMS TRADE AND SECURITY

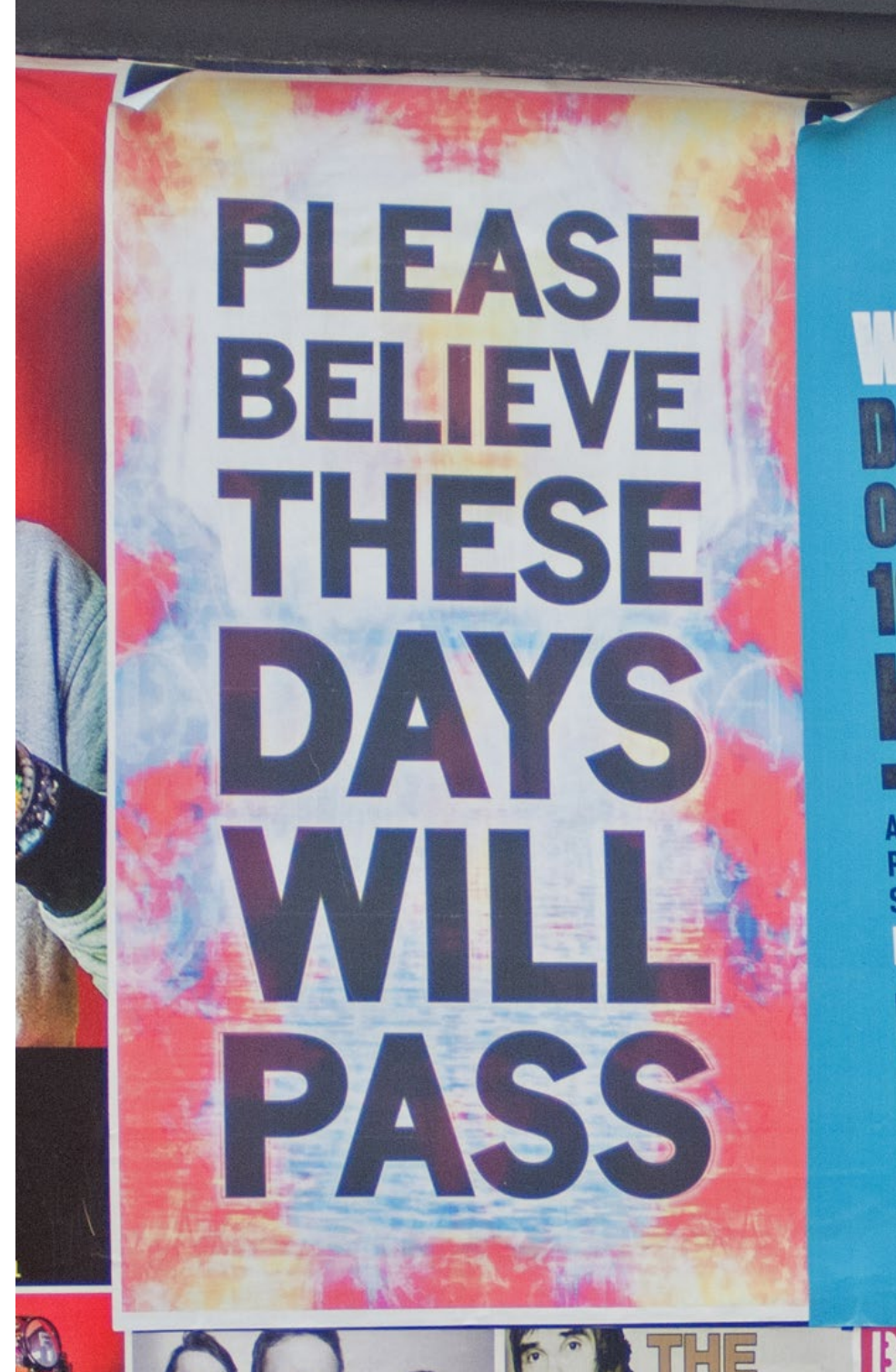
The COVID-19 crisis showed how quickly change can happen when the political will is there, with aerospace companies building ventilators instead of fighter jet engines within weeks, backed by government funding. The crisis also laid bare the UK Government's historic priorities when it comes to security. It chose to invest in aircraft carriers and nuclear weapons over protective equipment in preparation for a global pandemic.

Another security threat the UK Government isn't taking seriously enough is the climate crisis. As the 5th largest global contributor to historic carbon emissions, and the 9th largest economy in the world, the UK must take a lead in transitioning to a low carbon economy, and support poorer countries already coping with the impacts of climate change.

The UK must play its part in ensuring the rights of those in countries where the minerals used in renewables are mined, causing conflict and human rights abuses. This has had a huge impact on people of colour in countries still coping with the legacies of colonialism - Angola, Sierra Leone and the Congo.

Arms company workers have the vital skills needed to build a new, greener economy. There are more potential jobs in marine and offshore wind industries than in the entire arms industry. We should be using our nation's skills to create a safer planet for us all, and jobs that are here to stay.

The hundreds of millions of pounds currently shoring up the arms industry should be subsidising a green revolution. We need to build new infrastructure and retrain arms and fossil fuel company workers, ensuring a smooth transition away from industries that take lives to ones that protect them. We need to build a society where real human needs are prioritised.



# THE UK ARMS TRADE & BAHRAIN

I have campaigned for human rights and democracy since the Arab Spring erupted in my home country, Bahrain, in 2011. As a result of my work, I have faced torture and imprisonment.

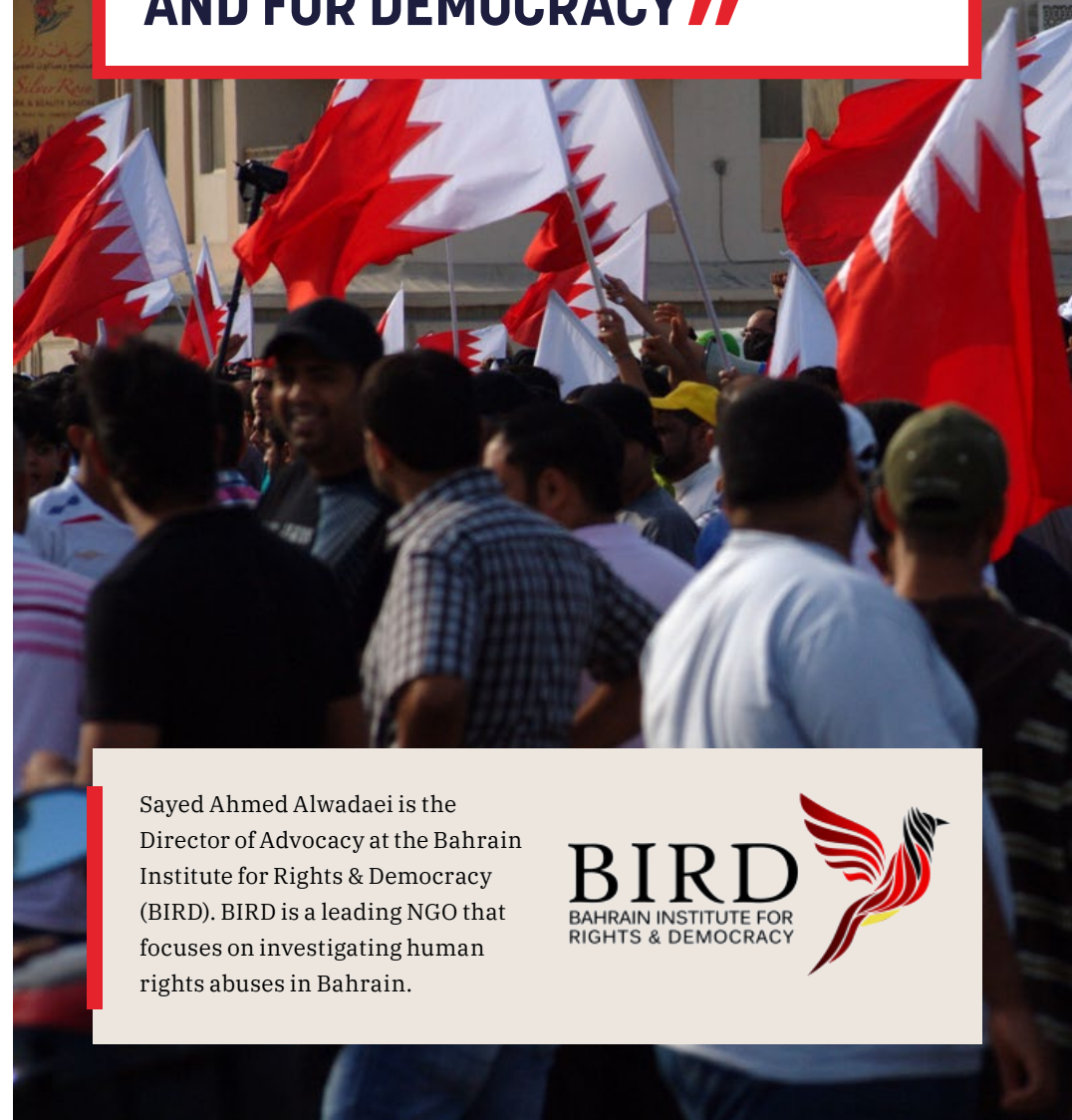
But what disgusts me the most is the targeting of my family, to silence me for exposing the horrific abuses committed by the regime. Bahrain is a small island, but its people have experienced abuse on an unimaginable scale. Peaceful protests are crushed, and detainees are denied even basic medical treatment.

In 2011, when Saudi Arabian security forces were invited into Bahrain to crush pro-democracy protesters, they used UK-manufactured armoured vehicles to do so. When Saudi Arabia and Bahrain bomb schools and hospitals in Yemen, they do so with UK/US arms.

The UK government is so desperate to appease its Gulf ally that it is willing to ignore its own constituents. My wife and I have lived in London since 2012. In 2017 she was detained at a Bahraini airport. An officer threatened her: “Who should we start with, Sayed’s family or yours?” Since then, our family members have been tortured and imprisoned. Despite their suffering, the UK continues to rely on Bahrain’s assurance that the reprisals have nothing to do with me.

I have always been keen to join protests for human rights and against the arms trade, but at times the threats have made me hesitant. Over time I have come to realise that I have no choice but to keep fighting – for my family, for my country, and for democracy.

**// OVER TIME I HAVE COME TO REALISE THAT I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO KEEP FIGHTING – FOR MY FAMILY, FOR MY COUNTRY, AND FOR DEMOCRACY //**



Sayed Ahmed Alwadaei is the Director of Advocacy at the Bahrain Institute for Rights & Democracy (BIRD). BIRD is a leading NGO that focuses on investigating human rights abuses in Bahrain.



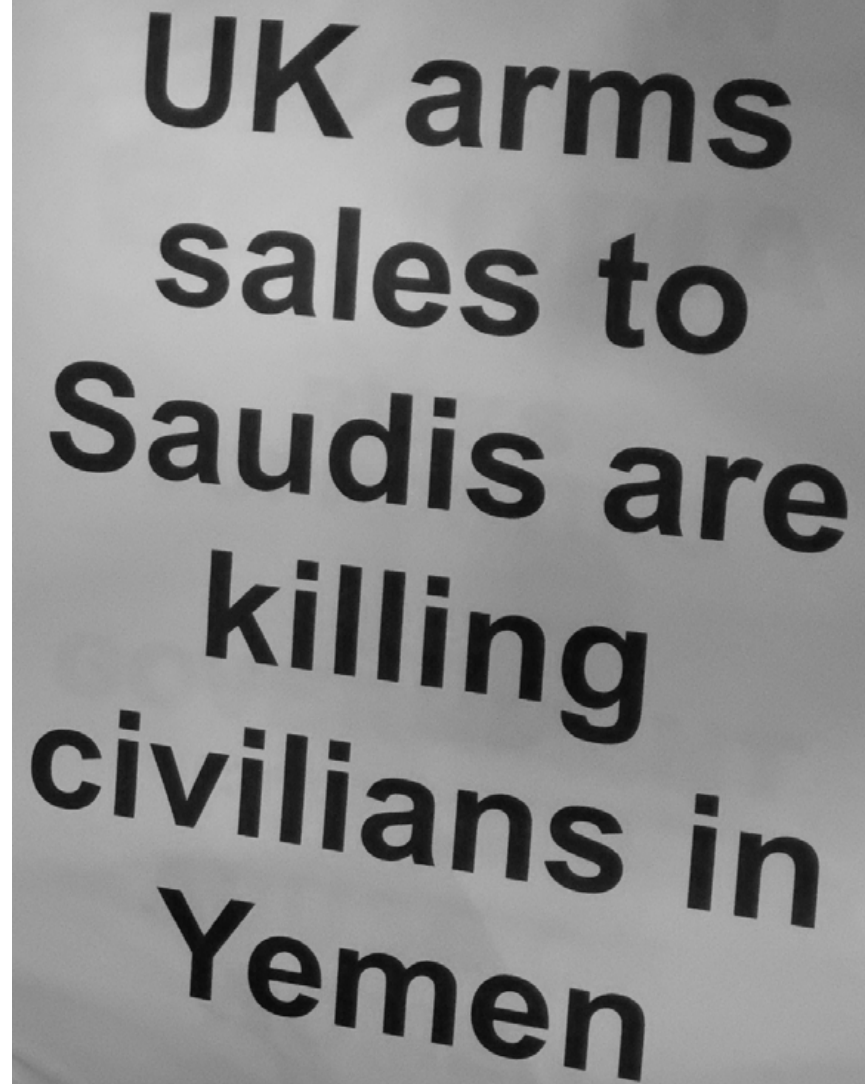
**We spoke to Arabian activist Ameen Nemer about his views on the arms trade and why we must take action to oppose it.**

**Why are you opposed to the arms trade?** I oppose it because it brings wars rather than peace. We have suffered a lot in the Middle East and the rest of the world. We need a different strategy to stabilise the world.

**Why does the Saudi regime spend so much money on weapons, and what effect does this have?** Before launching the war in Yemen, the Saudi regime used to spend so much money on itself. Members of the Saudi Royal Family made a lot of money through bribes, just like what happened in the Al-Yammah deal with Bander Bin Sultan. These weapons will not end up in a museum. They might be used inside Saudi Arabia if people go on mass peaceful demonstrations. In 2017 my town saw a paramilitary operation that lasted 3 months killing 27, injuring 100s and displacing 1000s. These weapons could be used in Yemen where Saudi forces have killed thousands and put millions at risk of famine in the worst man-made humanitarian catastrophe.

**Why do you think the UK Government is so supportive of the regime?** There are two reasons. First, to make money. Second, to keep their influence in the Middle East. Obviously, this influence has not helped the region, instead it has brought death and destruction.

**What kind of relationship would you like to see between the UK and Saudi?** I oppose the Saudi regime and do not recognise its legitimacy. It does not represent the people in Arabia. It is an absolute monarch and people have no real representation for decision making. I want a democratic government that represents the people. Then I want to see a mutual relationship based on respect and serving the interests of the people in health, education and economy rather than wars. Britain has to get over the nostalgia of the Empire.



UK arms sales to Saudis are killing civilians in Yemen

Ahmed Jahaf is a political artist who lives and works under bombardment & blockade in Sana'a the capital of Yemen.



# THE STRANGER BY AMINA ATIQ

I always felt like a stranger returning home  
but I only visit in the summer.

But you were always too kind,  
waiting for my return.

5 years ago this summer- I kissed  
your forehead and whispered,  
I will see you soon.

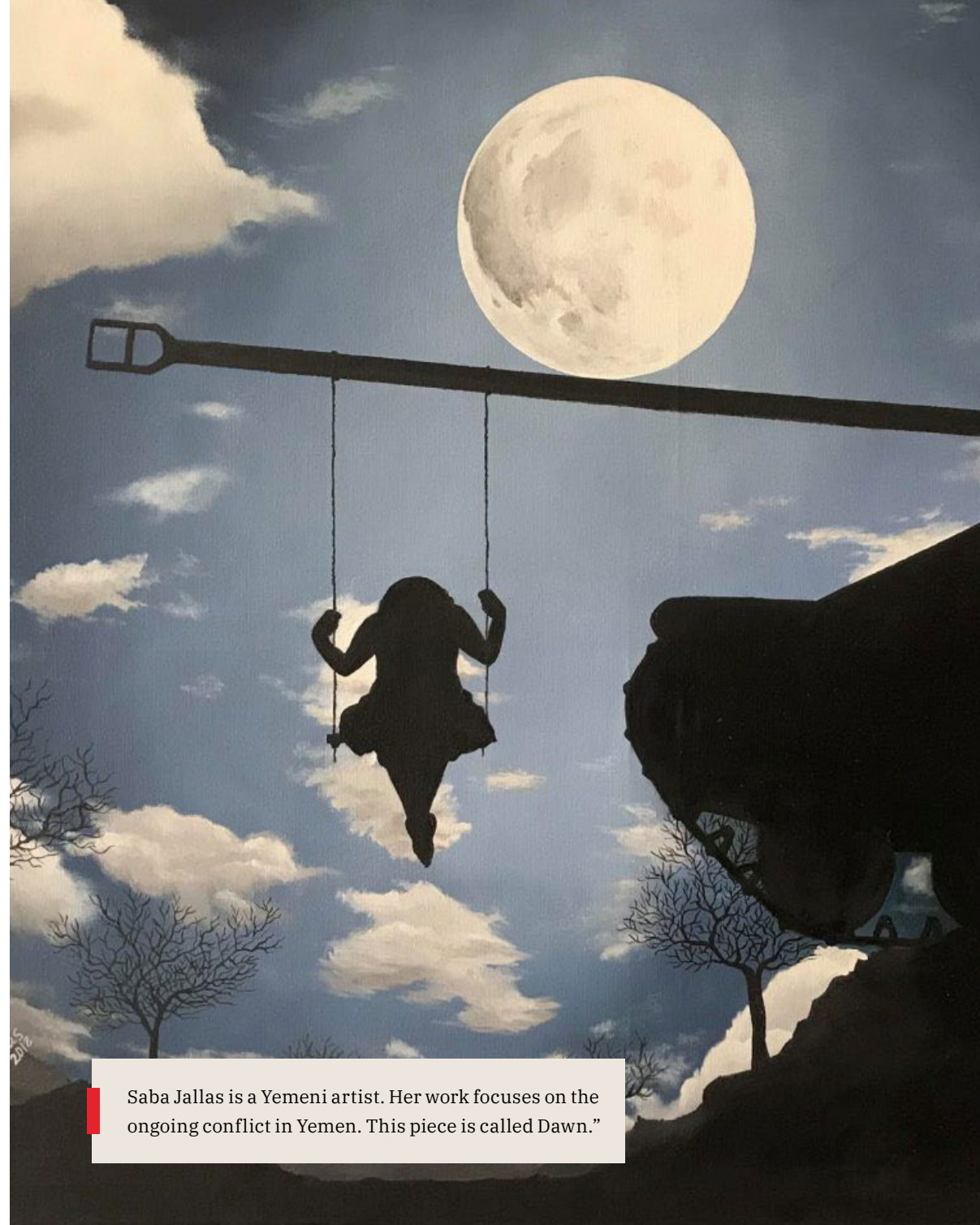
This goodbye drowned  
and summer memories faded.

Yet, I am a stranger to your pain,  
the blockade to your lifesaving needs,  
the grief in your own home,  
your open wound- no doctor has  
seen a skin disease like this one before.  
Your heartbreak bigger than love,  
your headache in the morning no coffee can cure.  
The fear polluting your air with no-one to trust,

the numbness to your throat left you speechless  
and the stack of debt sitting on your shoulders.  
The illness of your parents unspoken of,  
your missing husband and the death of your child.

Amina Atiq is a writer, performance artist, workshop facilitator and activist. She has been featured and published on various artistic platforms such as BBC Radio 5 live, BBC Radio 6 music and the Independent, among others.

Saba Jallas is a Yemeni artist. Her work focuses on the ongoing conflict in Yemen. This piece is called Dawn.”





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