

CAAT NEWS

The quarterly magazine for Campaign Against Arms Trade

Issue 258

Winter 2020



NEW LEGAL CHALLENGE LAUNCHED TO STOP ARMS SALES TO SAUDI

PLUS

CAAT reading group **P7**

Scotland spaceport **P11**

Military training **P14**



**CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
ARMS
TRADE**

We hope that you are all healthy and well in this strange new climate. You will notice some changes with this issue of CAAT News, and our recently revamped website, caat.org.uk. We would be very grateful if you could share your thoughts on this with us, as we want this to be the best possible magazine. You can reach me on Andrew@caat.org.uk. We have more details of the new website on page 6.

In this issue we also have news about a new Judicial Review that CAAT is bringing as well as details of our recently locked-down reading group events and of UK military training for abusive regimes.

Editor Andrew Smith

Design Chris Woodward

Proofreader John Moseley

Legal Consultant Glen Reynolds

Printed by e-Mediacy on 100% recycled paper using only post-consumer waste.

The content and views expressed in articles, advertisements and promotional material included within CAAT NEWS by other organisations are not necessarily endorsed or supported by CAAT. Any related enquiries or concerns should be addressed to the relevant organisation.

Campaign Against Arms Trade works to end the international arms trade. The arms business has a devastating impact on human rights and security and damages economic development. Large-scale military procurement and arms exports only reinforce a militaristic approach to international problems.

Campaign Against Arms Trade,
Unit 4, 5–7 Wells Terrace, London, N4 3JU
Tel 020 7281 0297
Email enquiries@caat.org.uk
Web caat.org.uk
Twitter @CAATuk

If you would like to stop being sent CAAT News, or change any of the ways that you hear from us, email office@caat.org.uk

To receive this issue of CAAT NEWS in large print please call **0790 913 0886**

Contents

- 3** Arms to Saudi Arabia legal update
- 4–5** Arms Trade Shorts
- 6** New website
- 7** CAAT reading group
- 8–9** Saudi Arabia
- 10** Local groups
- 11** Scotland spaceport and local groups
- 12** Stop arming Israel
- 13** Future conflict and UK arms sales
- 14** Military training | CAAT in Parliament
- 15** They said it | Taking action | Xmas cards

Photo: OffThe Couch | Source: Twitter



Photo: Astrium | Source: Defence Images | MoD



Photo: Defence Images | Source: Flickr



STOP ARMING SAUDI: NEW LEGAL CHALLENGE

In October we launched a new legal challenge to the UK's weapons sales for use in the war in Yemen. Our action continues until we stop these sales once and for all.

In July 2020 the Government resumed issuing arms export licences for use in the war in Yemen.

Since March 2015, bombing by the Saudi-led coalition has targeted schools and hospitals, food supplies, weddings and funerals – and UK weapons are playing a central role in the attacks.

CAAT's previous legal challenge had put a stop on new arms export licences to the Saudi-led coalition. In June 2019 the Court of Appeal ruled in CAAT's favour, finding Government decisions to allow arms sales were "irrational and therefore unlawful." The Government was ordered to retake all decisions to export arms to Saudi Arabia in accordance with the law and to stop issuing new arms export licences for use in the war.

As a result, hundreds of millions of pounds worth of arms sales were put on hold.

Then in July 2020 the Secretary of State for International Trade, Liz Truss, issued a written statement to Parliament. She said that the Government had completed its

review of previous decisions – and concluded that war crimes committed in the attacks on Yemen were just "isolated incidents." The Government would now begin "the process of clearing the backlog of licence applications for Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners."

Once again the Government has decided to prioritise arms company profits over the pursuit of peace and security in Yemen

In some ways this is no surprise. The Government has done all it can to maintain business as usual, whatever atrocities the Saudi-led coalition has committed.

But this conclusion is not compatible with the evidence – and it is astonishing that the Government could conclude that such licences comply with the UK's export licensing criteria.

Just last month, a new report from a UN group of experts on Yemen repeated "its concern about third States transferring

The journey so far

January 2016: Pre-action correspondence with government

March 2016: Formal legal challenge launched

February 2017: Hearing in High Court

July 2017: CAAT's case is rejected; we appeal

May 2018: Permission to appeal is granted

April 2019: Appeal court hearing

June 2019: Appeal Court finds in CAAT's favour. No new arms export licences for use in Yemen war may be granted. Government is ordered to retake its existing decisions. The Government appeals to the Supreme Court

July 2020: The Government announces it has reviewed its past decisions, as ordered by the Court of Appeal. Having done that, it will resume issuing licences for use in the war, and drops its Appeal to the Supreme Court

October 2020: Second legal challenge launched

arms to parties to the conflict in Yemen in blatant disregard of the documented patterns of serious violations of IHL and human rights law in the conflict to date."

Once again the Government has decided to prioritise arms company profits over the pursuit of peace and security in Yemen, and over Yemeni lives. Once again we must fight this until we stop these sales once and for all.

As the wheels of the legal process begin to turn again, please help keep the pressure on the Government in Parliament by raising this issue with your MP.

On pages 8–9 we debunk some of the Government's justifications for continuing the sales

Online, visit caat.org.uk/stop-arming-saudi to find more resources, use our online tool to email your MP, and join our upcoming events.

ARMS TRADE SHORTS

Arms to US police

The UK government has resumed the sale of tear gas and rubber bullets to US police forces. This follows an internal review which it has refused to make public

and comes despite the repeated use of violent force against Black Lives Matter protesters.

The Independent, 29 July 2020



Photo: Quinn Norton | Source: Flickr

Indonesia

The Indonesian military has expressed interest in buying Austria's fleet of 15 Eurofighter jets. This follows Austria's decision to retire the aircraft in 2017. Austria acquired the aircraft in 2002.

Defense News, 20 July 2020



Photo: Pavel Vanka | Source: Flickr

US arms sales

The US government is developing new payment options to ensure that arms sales continue despite the COVID crisis. Under new plans, buyers will be able to fund arms sales through US bank loans and altering existing payment schedules to stretch the costs over time.

Defense News, 4 August 2020

The US is in negotiations to sell \$7 billion worth of arms to Taiwan, including cruise missiles, mines and drone equipment. Since taking office the Trump administration has already licensed \$15 billion worth of arms to Taiwan.

Wall Street Journal, 16 September 2020

Nuclear weapons

The UK defence secretary, Ben Wallace, has written to the US Congress urging it to support spending on a controversial new warhead that he argues is critical for "the future of Nato as a nuclear alliance." This part of the programme is expected to cost \$14 billion, with the total cost of renewing US nuclear weapons expected to cost over \$1 trillion.

The Guardian, 1 August 2020

Borders

The UK government deployed Watchkeeper drones to fly over the Channel to intimidate migrants crossing to the UK. The drone programme has cost the UK over £1 billion and has previously been used in Afghanistan.

The Independent, 31 August 2020

Hong Kong

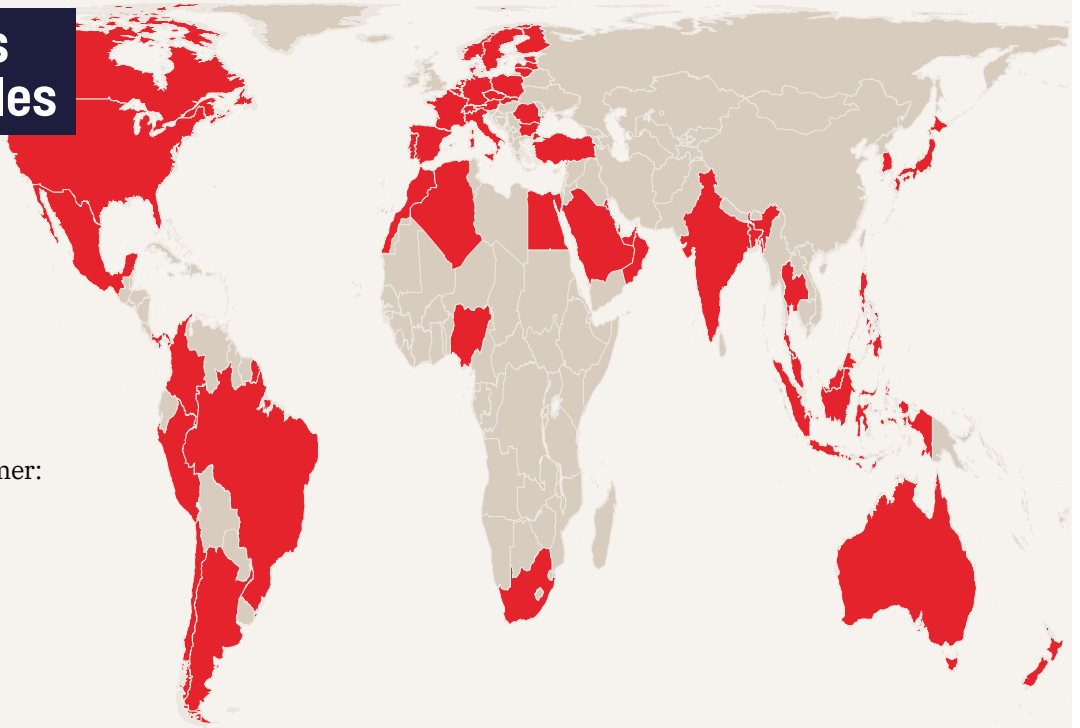
The UK All Party Parliamentary Group on Hong Kong has concluded that the Hong Kong police "indisputably" broke international human rights laws in its repression of recent protests. The group is composed of MPs from across different parties.

HongKongWatch.org, 5 August 2020

Target markets for UK arms sales

Each year the UK government's arms sales unit identifies "key markets" for "defence and security opportunities."

A list of countries being targeted in 2019/20 was released during the summer:



Algeria	Brazil	Egypt	Italy	Morocco	Peru	Romania	Switzerland
Argentina	Bulgaria	Estonia	Japan	Netherlands	Philippines	Saudi Arabia	Thailand
Australia	Canada	Finland	Kuwait	New Zealand	Poland	Singapore	Turkey
Austria	Chile	France	Latvia	Nigeria	Portugal	Slovakia	UAE
Bahrain	Colombia	Germany	Lithuania	Norway	Qatar	South Africa	USA
Bangladesh	Czech Republic	India	Malaysia	Oman	Republic of Korea	Spain	
Belgium	Denmark	Indonesia	Mexico	Panama		Sweden	

Source: caat.org.uk/challenges/government-support/government-arms-promotion-unit/priority-markets/

Oman

The UK government has announced a £23.8 million investment in a military base in Oman. The money will enable the UK to treble the size of the base, which is used to deploy UK navy deployments in the region.

Ministry of Defence, 12 September 2020

Israel

Israel and Italy have confirmed a major exchange of military equipment. Israel is exchanging anti-tank guided missiles and aircraft simulators for training helicopters.

Times of Israel, 23 September 2020

Bahrain

The UK has completed the sale of the HMS Clyde warship to Bahrain. The vessel, which was decommissioned in 2019, was originally intended to be sold to Brazil.

UK Defence Journal, 7 August 2020

Greece

Witness reports and photos from Athens suggest that the Greek police used UK-made tear gas against pro-democracy campaigners. Over recent weeks the Greek police have also used tear gas against refugees at the Moria refugee camp.

The Ferret, 2 September 2020

With tensions rising between Turkey and Greece, the Greek authorities have announced that they will be purchasing new weapons including military helicopters, frigates, anti-tank weapons and combat aircraft.

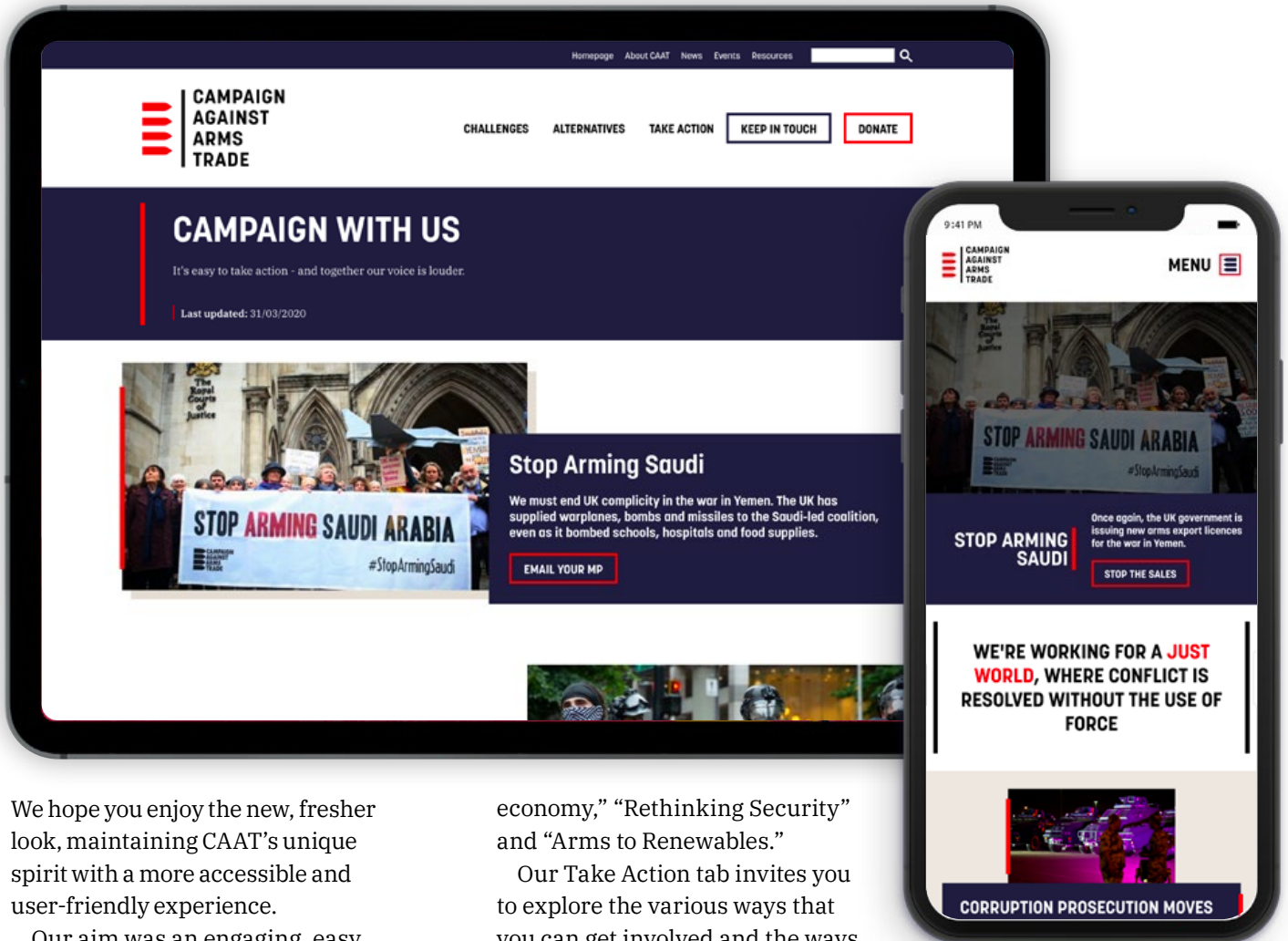
Al Jazeera, 12 September 2020



Photo: Off The Couch | Source: Twitter

CAAT'S NEW WEBSITE

We are thrilled to announce the launch of CAAT's brand new website!



We hope you enjoy the new, fresher look, maintaining CAAT's unique spirit with a more accessible and user-friendly experience.

Our aim was an engaging, easy to navigate site to best share the breadth of information we develop and help you, our supporters and partners, as well as journalists and Members of Parliament, expose the arms trade.

Our library of resources includes our numerous reports, our data browsers and CAAT News magazines, all clearly laid out to better facilitate knowledge sharing.

The website aims to explain all aspects of the arms trade, including exports, policing, borders, the climate crisis and a militaristic understanding of security, as accessibly and clearly as possible. We have taken particular care to outline alternatives to both security and employment in the arms sector and have broken down some key factors, including "Jobs & the

economy," "Rethinking Security" and "Arms to Renewables."

Our Take Action tab invites you to explore the various ways that you can get involved and the ways that you can promote our work to others. There are also ways to stay in touch and keep informed about our work, how to take part in our

Our aim was an engaging, easy to navigate site to best share the breadth of information we develop

Trainings & Events and how to join a local action group and campaign safely in your local area. Students can click on our Universities link and join like-minded students and staff across the UK working to break institutional ties with arms companies.

We have also taken great care to ensure that this new site is capable of supporting Arabic script and will be translating key reports and data in 2021 to help strengthen the

work of our Middle Eastern partner organisations in their activism and campaigning.

Finally, our new Shop has been built in shopify, to enable a much easier and more efficient shopping experience – especially when purchasing CAAT Christmas and Holiday cards this year.

We do hope you enjoy the new site and that you find it better supports your needs, your activism and your campaigning. We hope that it can help us to grow and strengthen our movement towards ending the arms trade.

Please visit our website at caat.org.uk. We would be grateful for any feedback to be sent to andrew@caat.org.uk



Image: Lety Wilson

“Arms Trade 101 & Intersecting Issues”: (Un)Learning together through the CAAT Reading Series

It’s been a busy time at CAAT since the world went into some form of lockdown. Like many other organisations, we had to quickly adapt our ways of working and take ourselves and our community online. From trainings in how to make your meetings and decision-making virtual, to 101s on arms trade research by our fantastic CAAT researchers, to our regular Stop The Arms Fair Network check-ins, we’ve found ways to keep our community engaged through this challenging time.

One area of work we’ve poured energy and focus into is our hugely popular “Arms Trade 101 & Intersecting Issues” series, which saw us host a panel event in July featuring speakers such as Sham Murad from A is for Activism, Kojo Koram and Nadine El-Enany from Birkbeck University, Leon Sealey-Huggins of Warwick University, and our friend Greta Zarro from the Canada-based World Beyond War. This drew sign-ups from over 500 people internationally.

This event was followed by our very first six-week reading series, in which a cohort of committed thinkers joined us every Thursday evening online to reflect on the multiple ways the arms trade intersects with issues such as policing, militarised borders, the current COVID-19 pandemic, climate (in)justice, and of course

the ongoing relationship between the UK and Saudi Arabia as well as the Yemen crisis.

We’re also thrilled to have recently re-published our much loved “People Not War” zine which continues the theme of connecting the dots between the arms trade and other struggles

Once again, fantastic speakers such as academic and activist Adam Elliott-Cooper and campaigner Reem Abu-Hayyeh of MedAct – to name a few – led our sessions. They provided enlightening resources to challenge us to think critically and holistically about the arms trade and root it firmly within frameworks of racism, colonialism, and capitalism.



Adam Elliott-Cooper

The forced move online has enabled us to reach new audiences across the UK as well as globally – folks who perhaps were unable to participate in our work before. Whilst we cannot congregate on the ground and take to the streets in the ways we have historically,

we have taken the opportunity to learn together – particularly vital in this moment of great socio-political, economic and environmental change.

We’re also thrilled to have recently re-published our much loved “People Not War” zine, edited by our Training & Events Co-ordinator, Siana. This newly updated version of the zine continues the theme of connecting the dots between the arms trade and other struggles. It comes with a brand new cover design, as well as new pieces reflecting on the increasingly militarised nature of policing and border regimes and the many ways the arms trade affects our everyday lives. This is not a distant issue taking place “elsewhere.” The UK government plays a key role in the global arms trade, meaning the issue is very much on our doorsteps. We’re pleased to include the zine in this issue of CAAT news. It is also available on CAAT.org.uk.

Look out for a podcast edition of “People Not War” coming soon, as well as future reading groups and repeats of our sessions on arms trade research. We are committed to ensuring that the learning and necessary unlearning taking place here at CAAT, and in our wider community, will continue well beyond COVID.



UK ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA: THE DEVASTATING IMPACT

As we explained on page 3, the Government is once again issuing new export licences for arms to be used in the war in Yemen. We believe that decision is not only immoral, it is also illegal. That is why we have launched a new legal challenge against it.

UK rules expressly prohibit the licensing of arms exports where there is a clear risk they might be used in violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), yet, since the bombing of Yemen began in 2015, Saudi-led forces have been accused of clear and consistent breaches of IHL.

Thousands of Yemeni civilians have been killed by Saudi air strikes. These have hit civilian targets all over Yemen, including weddings and funerals, market places and warehouses, schools and hospitals.

The UK has licensed billions of pounds of arms sales to the Coalition – at least £5.3 billion in published figures since the war began, but CAAT estimates that the UK has actually supplied more than £15 billion of arms sales over this time.

UK weapons – including warplanes, bombs and missiles – are being used by the Saudi-led forces in Yemen, and have been linked to individual attacks violating IHL.

“Isolated incidents”

In June 2019 The Court of Appeal judged that the Government had acted “irrationally and therefore unlawfully” because it failed to make an assessment as to “whether the Saudi-led coalition had committed violations of IHL in the past, during the Yemen conflict, and made no attempt to do so.” This was necessary in order for the Government to be able to decide whether there is a clear risk of future serious violations.

In July 2020 the Government said it had now made this assessment and “the incidents which have been assessed to be possible violations of IHL occurred at different times, in different circumstances and for different reasons. The conclusion is that these are “isolated incidents.”

This claim does not hold water. It is contradicted not only by the sheer number of attacks on civilian targets, but by the fact that the same types of targets – schools, hospitals, agricultural

facilities, and more – have repeatedly been hit, regardless of so-called investigations by the Saudi authorities or training provided by the UK. These are clearly not isolated incidents but a pattern of repeated IHL breaches.

These are clearly not isolated incidents but a pattern of repeated breaches of International Humanitarian Law.

Responding to a parliamentary question by Labour MP Zarah Sultana, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Ministry of Defence) James Heappey confirmed that the Ministry of Defence has “tracked” 516 alleged breaches of IHL since the war began. That is nearly two possible breaches a week, and is a clear sign of a deadly and dangerous pattern.

The Government’s claims were undermined further in September, when a UN report accused parties to the conflict of “a consistent



pattern of harm to civilians” and “documented patterns of serious violations of IHL and human rights law” over the course of the war. The report also found that that arms sales and support from the UK and others “may amount to ‘aiding and assisting’ internationally wrongful acts in contravention of international law.”

Attacks on civilian infrastructure

Human rights monitors have documented widespread attacks on vital infrastructure. A recent report from Yemen-based group Mwatana gives details of 153 airstrikes impacting schools and educational facilities.

“In 140 of these cases, Mwatana researchers and witnesses interviewed by Mwatana did not identify military targets near or in the school that was damaged or destroyed by an airstrike. These Saudi/UAE-led coalition bombings form part of a pattern of attacks on civilian objects which appear to be indiscriminate.”

Mwatana has also documented 86 air raids on medical facilities,

Photo: Clément Alloing | Source: Flickr



The Ministry of Defence has “tracked” 516 alleged breaches of International Humanitarian Law since the war began



Photo: Crown Copyright | Source: Defence Images|MoD

as well as 107 on water tanks, trucks, drills and dams between 26 March 2015 and 30 June 2020.

In addition to the direct impact of the bombing, many more lives have been lost through the humanitarian catastrophe caused by the war and the Saudi-led Coalition’s air and naval blockade of Yemen. Nearly 80% of the population remain in need of humanitarian aid and protection. Attacks on food production and infrastructure suggest the deliberate use of starvation as a weapon of war. This would itself also constitute a war crime.

The humanitarian crisis is the worst in the world, and with the dual threat of COVID and cholera, it is likely to get even worse. The cost of rebuilding will be immense and yet the UN has said that there is a £1 billion shortfall in the aid that has been provided.

There cannot be peace as long as bombs are still falling. That is why it is imperative for arms exporting governments like the UK to stop the arms sales and end their complicity in this terrible war.

LOCAL GROUPS

Arms dealers out of Liverpool



When news broke that the “Electronic Warfare 2020” arms fair was going to be taking place at ACC Liverpool in November, local campaigners swung into action.

They received help from an unexpected source: CAAT activists in Scotland, who had already helped sink the UDT arms fair in Glasgow in 2018, stepped up to share their knowledge and research.

This research revealed worrying news. Elbit Systems, known for the drones and surveillance systems used against Palestinian communities was going to be there, as was Eurofighter consortium member and helicopter maker Leonardo, along with French arms company Thales and the world’s biggest arms dealer, Lockheed Martin.

As press coverage ramped up, an energetic local coalition emerged, featuring a broad civil society campaign,

including Liverpool Green Party councillors, and supported nationally by Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and BDS National Committee, as well as CAAT.

The week before a major demonstration was planned by the coalition, the organisers announced that the arms fair would not now be taking place in Liverpool after all.

Following the event’s cancellation, over 40,000 emails were sent to the Liverpool City Council Cabinet, demanding that the Mayor of Liverpool, Joe Anderson, implement a policy to ensure such an event will not take place in the city in the future.

Campaign organiser, Martin

Dobson commented, “Our broad based campaign has achieved a lot in a short amount of time but it will all be for nothing if we have this situation again in a couple of years. We need the Mayor and the whole of the Council to commit to a watertight ethical policy with the ACC that will see all arms fairs banned from the City Council owned buildings in the future.”

In a Tweet posted in a response to a video by comedian Alexei Sayle, who supported the campaign, the Mayor promised an ethical charter to govern future events at the ACC. Local campaigners will be making sure he sticks to his word: arms fairs have no place in Liverpool, or anywhere else.

Greater Rushmoor Against War keep it real

The DPRTE arms fair took place virtually this year due to the Covid crisis.

On the day of this year’s virtual fair, in September, local campaigners Greater Rushmoor Against War set up a real-world vigil outside the Council offices in Farnborough. They were joined in a socially distanced way by local CAAT supporters and members of faith groups, as well as Fr. Martin Newell from Stop the Birmingham Arms Fair.

They set-up an information stall, leafleted and spoke to passers-by, held memorials to those killed by the arms trade. They even had discussions with local councillors, including the Mayor, explaining the wider impact of the arms trade in the town. Of course, there was disagreement and argument, but everyone felt heard and new supporters joined the cause.

If you’d like to set up a vigil or stall in your town contact Kirsten, CAAT’s Local Outreach Coordinator at outreach@caat.org.uk



Campaigners from Greater Rushmoor Against War and friends say no to the “virtual” DPRTE arms fair in September

SCOTTISH SPACEPORTS

“We could get national security payloads into space in as little as seventy-two hours.” These were the words of an RAF Chief of Staff, moments after the UK Space Agency (UKSA) announced its plans to develop a spaceport in the UK, at the Farnborough Airshow in 2018. One year on and Lockheed Martin had received £23m in taxpayer funds and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is locked into owning and operating the UK’s first spaceport in Sutherland.

HIE is part of Scottish Enterprise, a Scottish Government business investment agency that has given millions of pounds worth of grants to arms manufacturers. Military interests have been integral to the Spaceport project from day one, despite it being pitched as a “commercial” venture.

The planning permission for the Sutherland Space Hub was approved unanimously by Highland Councillors regardless of the 400 objections to the proposal submitted by local residents questioning the environmental impact on the peatlands the site will be based on, and the ethical concerns over the military potential. Scottish Ministers signed a 75-year option to lease the land and we may now see the first launch in early 2022.

HIE has acknowledged that data gathered by satellites launched could be used for defence purposes. Military and spy satellites would have an incredible

impact on the operations of the MoD and its allies as well as the arms companies set to make astronomical profits from these operations. In recent months, Lockheed Martin has moved its support towards a site in Shetland, the Shetland Space Centre, taking

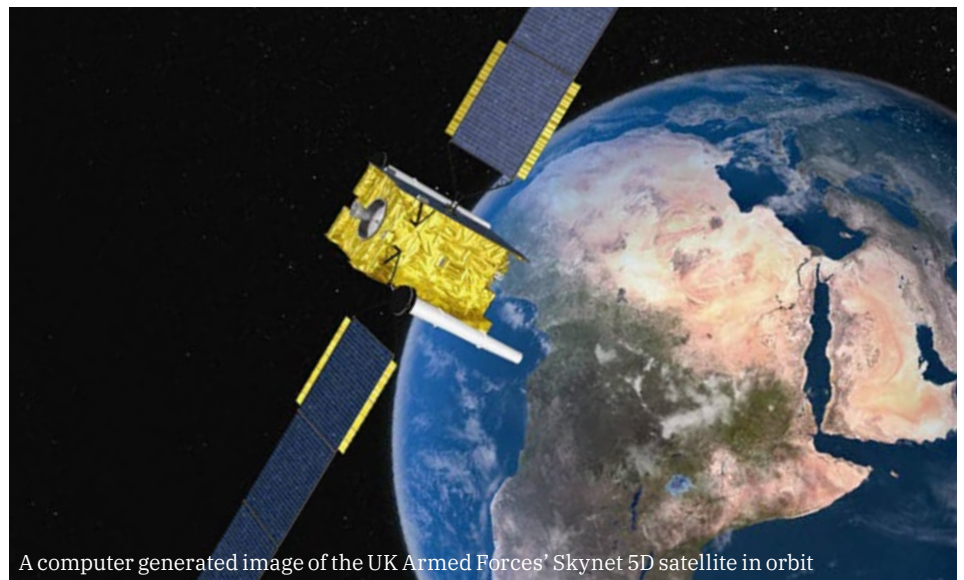
It is evident that the UK’s intelligence and surveillance will increase with these spaceports

the bulk of its funding from UKSA with them. This new site would allow for three launch pads, with one solely for their use, something that was made possible with the June 2020 signing of the UK-US Technology Safeguards Agreement.

The Scottish Government’s industry-led Scottish Space Leadership Council includes a

number of arms companies, such as Leonardo, Raytheon, BAE Systems and Chemring that are likely to push a militaristic agenda. Despite this, HIE denies that the Sutherland Space Hub will be used for military purposes, while both the Scottish and UK governments have said little about the matter.

The UK military has not been clear on what exactly the aforementioned “national security payload” could be, but it is evident that the UK’s intelligence and surveillance will increase with these spaceports. That is why we are calling on leaders in Holyrood and Westminster to properly scrutinise this project and refuse to allow military exploitation of a project that could boost our local and national economy and aid understanding of the ongoing climate emergency.



A computer generated image of the UK Armed Forces' Skynet 5D satellite in orbit

Photo: Astrium | Source: Defence Images | MoD

CAAT IN SCOTLAND LOCAL ACTIVITY!

For the last decade, CAAT Edinburgh has led the opposition to the arms trade in Scotland. They have run arms fairs out of the country, organised demonstrations at the Scottish Parliament and much more. Now they have been joined by CAAT activists in Ayrshire who are keen to organise

around the Chemring factory based in Stevenson and have their voice heard.

Get in touch with scotland@caat.org.uk for support organising in your community!



#STOPARMINGISRAEL DAY OF ACTION

Marking the six-year anniversary of Operation Protective Edge, Israel's 2014 bombardment and ground invasion of Gaza, hundreds of people took to the streets as part of the #StopArmingIsrael day of action with over 40 protests taking place across the UK.

The 51-day onslaught in 2014 resulted in the deaths of 2,200 Palestinians, a quarter of whom were children. Despite the atrocities, the UK continues to purchase Israeli “battle-tested” weapons and has licensed at least £364 million of military equipment and technology to Israel since then. The true figure cannot be known as these arms sales include 20 secretive “open” licenses, which allow unlimited deliveries over three to five years.

The UK continues to purchase Israeli ‘battle tested’ weapons and has licensed at least £364 million of military equipment and technology to Israel since 2014

A focus of the #StopArmingIsrael day was HSBC bank, which invests, provides services to and owns shares worth £831 million in several companies that sell weapons and equipment to Israel. These companies include BAE

Systems, the UK’s largest arms company, and Raytheon, weapon components from which were used in the 2014 assault. HSBC also owns shares in Caterpilllar (estimated at £99.5m in 2017) which knowingly sells bulldozers to the Israeli military for use in demolishing Palestinian homes, factories, agricultural land and water pipes and supplies equipment to reinforce the illegal Separation Wall and develop Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Under the guise of “halting” the current annexation plans comes the current agreement to “normalise” relations between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain – countries that have long enjoyed unofficial diplomatic and trade relations. Refusing to secure a single meaningful concession for Palestinians – reeling from a surge in COVID-19 outbreaks further compounded by Israel’s ongoing public health blockades – the US has reinforced

its commitment to guarantee Israel’s military advantage in the region and opened the floodgates to further arms sales, starting with the mooted sale of Reaper drones, EA-18G Growler jets and F-35 fighter planes to UAE.

In direct response to Israel’s annexation plans of Palestinian land in the West Bank, CAAT joined over 20 civil society organisations, trade unions, charities and religious groups in issuing a joint statement calling on public bodies to urgently “uphold their ethical and legal responsibilities to ensure human rights and international law are respected.”

Hence, taking into account the geo-political alliance of repressive regimes and amidst Israel’s current bombing of Gaza, we call on the UK government to impose an immediate two-way arms embargo until Israel complies with international law and ends it’s oppression of the Palestinian people.

RUMOURS OF WARS

Could the arms sales of today be fueling tensions and conflicts for years to come?
Dr Sam Perlo-Freeman of CAAT investigates.

Photo: Number 10 | Source: Flickr



The great majority of wars in recent decades have been internal conflicts, though often involving intervention by other states (such as the Saudi coalition in Yemen, or Russia, Iran, and Turkey in Syria). The US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the Ethiopia-Eritrea war from 1998–2000 are rare examples of direct wars of state against state.

However, interstate tensions have been rising sharply in recent years in numerous regions. In 2019, incidents such as the US assassination of an Iranian general in Iraq, and suspected Iranian attacks on Saudi oil facilities, brought these countries closer to war than they had been in a very long time, though thankfully the immediate threat has receded.

More recently, Indian and Chinese forces have clashed along their disputed Himalayan border, with one incident of hand-to-hand fighting in June leading to the death of 20 Indian soldiers. China has also been making increasingly aggressive moves towards Taiwan, which the former regards as part of its territory, with Chinese aircraft violating Taiwanese airspace 46 times in nine days in mid-September.

In Libya, Turkey on the one

hand and UAE and Egypt on the other have taken opposite sides in the civil war there, with Turkish and UAE drones competing for control of the skies. While their forces have not come into direct conflict, Egypt threatened to invade in July if Turkish-supported government forces attacked the city of Sirte. Turkish Bayraktar drones include key UK technology produced in Brighton by EDO-MBM.

In the Mediterranean, long-time rivals – though NATO allies – Greece and Turkey have seen severely increased tensions over their maritime disputes, with Turkish vessels, accompanied by warships, conducting energy exploration in waters Greece claims as part of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as recently as September. Both sides have talked of the possibility of military action. The French arms industry has already cashed in on Greek fears of its more powerful neighbour, with a recent agreement for Greece to buy 16 Rafale combat aircraft.

All of these tensions are driving forward the global arms race, to which the UK, like the US, Russia, France, and many others, are eager contributors. India and

Turkey are both major UK arms customers (see graphic). Despite a halt to new export licences to Turkey announced in October 2019 in response to the Turkish invasion of Rojava in Syria, significant deliveries continue to be made under existing licences, especially long-lasting and opaque open licences. BAE Systems is still being allowed to fulfil its £100 million contract to support Turkey's development of its own combat aircraft.

China and Taiwan are also significant customers, despite a partial arms embargo on China, covering major equipment. UK arms sales to Greece are much more limited.

Value of standard arms export licences to countries mentioned, 2015–19

Turkey	£1,086mn
India	£1,019mn
UAE	£736mn
Taiwan	£241mn
Egypt	£140mn
China	£101mn
Greece	£10mn

The UK often justifies its arms sales on the grounds that every nation is entitled to self-defence. Yet, very often, it is arming both sides of simmering conflicts, fuelling the competition between them and oblivious to the risk that these may escalate into war.

In all the above cases, we may reasonably hope that diplomacy will prevail and the countries concerned will pull back from the brink. But if war does break out, one thing is sure: UK-supplied arms will be involved, most often on both sides.

MILITARY TRAINING

It is not just through arms sales that the UK bolsters and supports human rights abusing regimes around the world. It is also through military training and collaboration. Until now, we have known little about the scale of this, but a recent parliamentary question from Labour MP Sam Tarry exposed it.

From 2018–2020 the UK provided military training for 17 countries identified as “human rights priority countries” by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO). The FCO defines these as countries where they are “particularly concerned about human rights issues” and believe the UK can make a difference. There are 30 countries in total.

In 2018–2020 alone, the UK armed forces has provided training to 17 of them: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, China, Colombia, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Maldives, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe.

A lot of the training for Saudi Arabian forces is linked to the use of UK-made fighter jets, which are being used in the war in Yemen. The Saudi-led bombardment has created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Some of the training courses provided to countries on the FCO list that have raised concern include:

2018/19

- **Bahrain:** International Officers Electronic Warfare
- **Bangladesh:** International Urban Operations Instructors Course
- **China:** Initial Officer Training
- **Egypt:** Amphibious Warfare Course
- **Pakistan:** International Air Battle Management Course
- **Saudi Arabia:** Fast Jet Tactical and Weapons
- **Sri Lanka:** Advanced Command and Staff Course
- **Uzbekistan:** Defence Train the Trainer



Photo: Astrium | Source: Defence Images | MoD

2019/20

- **Bahrain:** Sniper Platoon Commanders Course
- **Egypt:** All Arms Commando Course
- **Iraq:** Platoon Commanders’ Battle Course
- **Israel:** Amphibious Warfare Course
- **Maldives:** All Arms Basic Drill Instructor Course
- **Saudi Arabia:** International Officers Electronic Warfare

Note: All Arms refers to all branches of the armed forces, not to weapons.

There has also been training provided for regimes with poor human rights records that are not on the FCO list. These include armed forces in:

- **Belarus:** Advanced Command and Staff Course (2018/19)
- **Hong Kong:** Squadron Commanders Course – Security Clearance Only (2018/19)
- **Oman:** Platoon Commanders’ Battle Course Tactics Only (2018/19)

- **Philippines:** International Jungle Warfare Instructors Course (2019/20)
- **Qatar:** All Arms Commando Course (2018/19)
- **Turkey:** Light Weapon Design (2018/19)
- **United Arab Emirates:** International Officers Electronic Warfare (2018/19)

Many of these armies have appalling human rights records and have been linked to brutal oppression as well as international aggression. By training and collaborating with despots, dictatorships, and human rights abusers the UK risks making itself complicit in the abuses that are being inflicted.

For far too long, successive UK governments have talked about the importance of human rights and democracy while arming, supporting and strengthening authoritarian regimes across the world. There must be an end to the hypocrisy and a full review of which forces the UK has trained and if they have been linked to human rights abuses.

THEY SAID IT

“It is fair to say that the Government are already doing a fantastic job”

Oliver Waghorn, BAE Head of Government Relation when giving testimony about Government support for the arms trade to a parliamentary committee on 2 September 2020.

“I saved his ass... I was able to get Congress to leave him alone. I was able to get them to stop”

Donald Trump boasts to journalist Bob Woodward about his role in “saving” Mohammed Bin Salman, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, following the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. Business Insider, 10 September 2020

“SMEs hoping to gain a more direct access to decision-makers on trade shows now to have find other ways to get attention from the industry and militaries alike... These companies [may] eventually decide to turn away from the defence sector and hence to business in a non-military sector. This must not happen.”

Lorenz Lemhouse, defence consultant, on the impact of COVID on arms fairs. Global Defence Technology, September 2020,

TAKING ACTION

Following our successful series of events outlined on page 7, we are in the process of confirming a series of new events for the months ahead. Details will be available at caat.org.uk/events.

We hope that you stay safe and well, and that we see you soon.

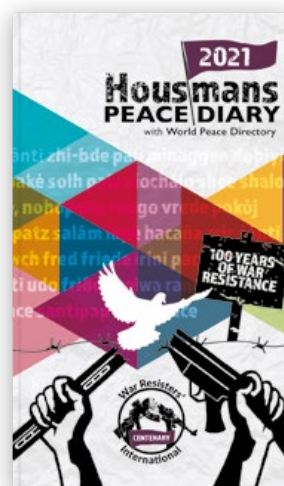
CAAT in Parliament

On September 02 2020, CAAT researcher Dr Sam Perlo-Freeman gave evidence to the International Trade Committee, a cross-party group of MPs. It was an important opportunity to ensure that CAAT’s arguments are heard in the corridors of power. With the formation of the new Committee on Arms Export Controls, we hope that there will be more parliamentary opportunities in the years ahead.



Christmas Cards and Peace Diaries

We have just updated the shop on our website, you can order Christmas cards, peace diaries and other gifts from caat.org.uk/shop.



DONATE TODAY!

You can donate to CAAT by either visiting our website at caat.org.uk, or completing the form below (in block capitals) and returning it to: Freepost RSYR-UCBS-GHEE, CAAT, Unit 4, 5-7 Wells Terrace, London, N4 3JU

Donations direct to CAAT are the most useful for the campaign, but if you send a Charities Aid Foundation cheque please make it payable to TREAT (Trust for Research and Education on Arms Trade) making clear that you wish for your donation to support CAAT's research programme. Unlike CAAT, TREAT is a registered charity (No.328694).

Personal details

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel: Email:

I would like to receive the CAAT News quarterly magazine by post: Yes No

I would like to receive updates about the campaign and urgent action opportunities by email: Yes No

I would like to receive occasional updates about the campaign by post: Yes No

Regular donation



A direct debit is the most convenient and cost effective way to support CAAT. Just £5 a month makes a real difference.

Instruction to your Bank/Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

To: The Manager Bank/Building Society:

Banks/building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions from some kind of accounts.

Address of Bank/Building Society:

Postcode:

Name(s) of account holder(s):

Bank/building society a/c no. Sort code:

I wish to donate £ every
 month quarter annually

Reference (CAAT use only)

Please pay Campaign Against Arms Trade Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Campaign Against Arms Trade and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signature(s):

Date:

Single donation

I wish to donate £ to CAAT and enclose a cheque or have completed my credit/debit card details.

CARD details

Credit/debit card type (please tick appropriate box): Mastercard Visa Visa Delta

Cardholder's name:

Credit/debit card number:

Start date: Expiry date: Security number: (3 digit number on back of card)