

CAAT NEWS

The quarterly magazine for Campaign Against Arms Trade

Issue 259

Spring 2021



10 YEARS LATER THE UK IS STILL ARMING REPRESSION

PLUS

UK training for repressive police forces **P3**

Will Joe Biden end arms sales to Saudi Arabia? **P7**

Arms sales following the 'Arab Spring' **P8-9**



**CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
ARMS
TRADE**

Happy new year to all CAAT supporters. We hope that you are as well and can be and that 2021 is a better year for everyone. In this issue we are looking to the future, as we explore what a Joe Biden Presidency means for arms sales. We are also looking back at the “Arab Spring” uprisings of 2011, and how the UK responded.

At CAAT we are also seeing the retirement of our parliamentary coordinator, Ann Feltham, who has worked for CAAT for over 30 years and been instrumental in growing the organisation and our campaigns. We all wish Ann very well in everything that follows, and are sure you will too.

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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.

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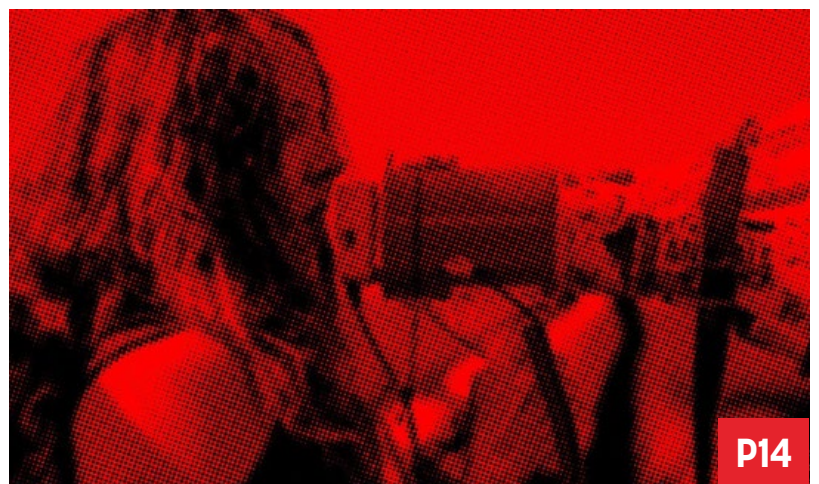


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Photo: Global Justice Now | Source: Flickr



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SECURITY AND POLICING

This March the Home Office will be hosting its annual Security & Policing arms fair. It is a secretive event that brings many of the biggest arms companies together with representatives of police and security forces from across the world, including many from forces that have been widely accused of torture and other abuses.

The 2020 event was attended by international delegations from Algeria, Bahrain, Brunei, Egypt, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and the United States, all of which have police forces with very poor human rights records.

This year the event will be rather different. It will all be taking place online. Prospective buyers will be able to take part in a virtual arms fair, with online

displays and demonstrations. The event may be quieter than usual, but the equipment on display will be just as deadly. Equipment will include small arms, anti-protest weaponry and spyware, all of which can be used to embolden state violence and for repression.

It is not just policing and conventional weapons that the event focuses on. It is also militarised borders and the kind of equipment that has enabled the Hostile Environment (and

The event may be quieter than usual, but the equipment on display will be just as deadly.

other) anti-migrant policies that have been enforced in the UK and around the world.

It is vitally important that we shut down the arms industry in all of its forms, and that cannot happen as long as events like Security & Policing are taking place.

Nigeria police training

One organisation that will attend Security & Policing is The College of Policing. Since its founding in 2012, the College of Policing has provided training and assistance to at least 76 countries, including many forces that have been accused of terrible abuses. Those trained include police forces in Hong Kong and Egypt – forces from both countries have used UK-made tear arms against campaigners over recent years.

Last October a Parliamentary Question by Kate Osamor MP confirmed that the UK had provided training and equipment for the notorious Special Anti-

Robbery Squad (SARS) police unit in Nigeria. This revelation came despite initial denials by Ministers. SARS has been widely linked to extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, unlawful detention and other abuses.

In total, the College has provided training for at least 12 countries that are listed as “human rights priority countries” by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. The killing of George Floyd and the repression that followed drew international attention to state violence. But it is not just an issue in the United States, it is happening all across the world.

As Siana Bangura, the Training & Events Co-ordinator at CAAT, told the Independent, “There must be a full and urgent investigation into all police and military training that has been provided to Nigeria, and if any of the forces trained by the UK have been implicated in this or other cases of abuse or torture.

“The UK should not be exporting violence, an ongoing expression of colonial practices, whether it is in the form of weapons or training. The current policy of support and collaboration risks providing moral cover for those that commit abuses.”

ARMS TRADE SHORTS

Italy

The Italian Green Party has announced plans to sue the Italian government over arms sales to Egypt. The complaint relates to the sale of two warships in 2020 and follows

continued anger over the 2016 murder of an Italian citizen, Giulio Regeni, who many believe was killed by Egyptian security forces.

New Arab, 08/01/2021



Photo: Alisdare Hickson | Source: Flickr

Germany

Government statistics show that Germany approved over €1 billion in arms deals to the Middle East in 2020. The largest buyer of these arms was Egypt, with €752 million worth of arms sales having been approved.

DW, 03/01/2021

Arms sales

Analysis by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has found that global arms sales by the 25 biggest arms companies increased by 8.5% in 2019. It was the first time that a Middle East-based arms company had finished in the top 25 biggest arms companies.

Business Recorder, 21/12/2020

Turkey

The US has imposed sanctions against Turkey over its deployment of a Russian-made missile system. The US claims that the Russian-made S-400 surface-to-air missile system is incompatible with Nato technology. The sanctions are all targeted on Turkey's arms industry.

BBC News, 14/12/2020

US arms sales

The New York Center For Foreign Policy Affairs has taken legal proceedings to challenge the US State Department over a proposed sale of \$23 billion worth of arms to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The organisation alleges that the Trump administration failed to provide a reasonable explanation for its decision to sell F-35 fighter jets and other weapons, placing it in breach of the Administrative Procedure Act.

Defense News, 13/01/2021

The US State Department has approved the sale of \$290 million worth of bombs to the Saudi Arabian military. Critics have argued that the sale is being rushed-through Congress. The sale was approved in the final weeks of Donald Trump's presidency.

The Guardian, 30/12/2021

Royal Windsor

Organisers of the Royal Windsor Horse Show have agreed to adopt a human rights policy following accusations that the show is being used by the Bahraini royal family to distract from rights abuses. This follows a long and high profile campaign by Bahraini activists in the UK. The campaign has been supported by CAAT.

The Guardian, 12/01/2021



Photo: Dmitriy Fomin | Source: Flickr

Political donations

Photo: Marco Verch Professional Photographer | Source: Flickr



Boeing, BAE Systems, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin are among the companies that have announced they are pausing political donations

in the US. This follows the storming of the Capitol by supporters of Donald Trump.
Defense News, 14/01/2021

Saudi Arabia

A series of Parliamentary Questions by Emily Thornberry MP revealed that a number of airstrikes in Yemen have not been recorded in its confidential log of alleged breaches of international humanitarian law. Many of these involved civilian casualties.
The Observer, 03/01/2021

China

The Chinese government has said that it will impose sanctions on US companies including Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Raytheon, who it says are involved in arms sales to Taiwan.
Reuters, 06/01/2021

CAAT in Parliament

In December, CAAT Research Coordinator Sam Perlo-Freeman gave evidence to the Committee on Arms Export Controls (CAEC), the Parliamentary committee charged with monitoring the UK arms trade. CAEC was recently reformed following the last election, after a long period of inactivity.

Asked about the government's review of arms sales to Saudi Arabia following the Court of Appeal ruling in 2019, Sam tore into the government's conclusion that there were only a small number of "isolated incidents" of International Humanitarian Law violations by the Saudi-led coalition bombing Yemen, which he said flies in the face of an overwhelming body of evidence from UN experts and respected Yemeni and international NGOs, showing hundreds of rigorously verified lethal attacks on civilian targets.

He said that the Government appeared determined to find a way of allowing them to continue arms sales to Saudi Arabia, regardless of the evidence of their devastating consequences.

CAEC has recently also taken evidence from export control

officers and arms industry representatives. While the views of the MPs on CAEC range from very sympathetic to CAAT's position to very pro-arms industry, CAAT welcomes the renewed Parliamentary scrutiny of the arms trade.



Photo: Rajan Manickavasagam | Source: Flickr

STOP ARMING SAUDI

March 26 will make it six years since Saudi-led forces began a brutal bombardment of Yemen.

The bombing has been supported every step of the way by Downing Street. Over half of Saudi Arabia's combat aircraft used for the bombing raids are UK-supplied and they are dropping UK-made bombs and firing UK-made missiles. This has created the worst humanitarian crisis in the world, with the United Nations

The government may think that the widespread destruction of schools, hospitals and homes can be dismissed as 'isolated incidents' but we do not

estimating that over 230,000 people have died as a result of the conflict.

The arms sales that have fueled the war have been immoral, and we believe they are also illegal. A legal case brought by CAAT saw a temporary halt to new licences in June 2019. This meant hundreds of millions of pounds worth of arms sales being put on hold.

However, in July 2020 the Government announced that it was resuming sales. This followed a review claiming that the many war crimes documented by the UN and NGOs on the ground were "isolated incidents" and did not reflect a pattern. This was a whitewash. These "isolated incidents" actually amounted to hundreds of attacks on residential areas, schools, hospitals, civilian gatherings, and agricultural land and facilities.



Photo: Yemen Fly Bombs by Ahmed Jahaf

This claim was further undermined in January 2021, when a series of Parliamentary Questions by Emily Thornberry revealed that a number of attacks on civil targets had not been included by the Ministry of Defence on its list of possible war crimes.

An investigation by CAAT and the Guardian found that BAE Systems alone had generated £15 billion worth of revenues from sales and services for the Saudi military in the first five years of the conflict.

We have launched a new legal case to challenge the decision. The Government may think that the widespread destruction of schools, hospitals and homes can be dismissed as "isolated incidents" but we do not.

The bombing has been devastating for Yemen, but it has been lucrative for the arms companies. An investigation by CAAT and the Guardian found that BAE Systems alone had generated £15 billion worth of revenues from sales and services to the Saudi military in the first five years of the conflict. CAAT estimates that the total value of arms exports to Saudi forces since the war began is at least £18 billion.

With a new President in the White House, it is possible that we may see a change to US policy regarding Saudi Arabia (see page 7). This could have a major impact on other arms-dealing governments like the UK. As this anniversary approaches, it is more important than ever that the war is brought to an end."

20,000

The number of air strikes by Saudi-led forces since the war began

230,000

The number of people the United Nations estimates have died as a result of the war

£18bn

The total value of arms and military services provided for Saudi forces by UK companies

WILL PRESIDENT BIDEN END ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA?

After months of false accusations of fraud, failed legal challenges, and a fascist mob taking over the Capitol, by the time you read this Joe Biden will have replaced Donald Trump as President of the world's most powerful nation – and biggest arms dealer. What will this mean for US arms sales in the future?

For the most part, probably not much. Like previous administrations of both parties, Biden and his team still see arms sales as a key tool of US foreign policy. Indeed, under President Obama, US arms exports reached record levels.

In the dying weeks of his presidency, Trump announced a new \$800 million sale of over 10,000 bombs to Saudi Arabia

However, in one crucial case there are very real hopes of a change in US policy, namely on arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The murder of Jamal Khashoggi

caused genuine outrage among US politicians, and heightened attention on the devastating Saudi-led war on Yemen. When the US Congress voted in 2019 to stop some arms sales to Saudi, it was only Trump's veto that allowed them to continue. Trump also resumed exports of precision-guided munitions to Saudi Arabia that Obama had (belatedly) put on hold, over concern about their use in Yemen. Meanwhile, President Biden has made numerous statements promising to reassess the US relationship with Saudi Arabia, hold them to account for crimes such as

the Khashoggi murder, and end support – including arms sales – for the war in Yemen.

He will have to act quickly. In the dying weeks of his presidency, Trump announced a new \$800 million sale of over 10,000 bombs to Saudi Arabia. Tens of billions of dollars of previous orders of fighter aircraft, bombs and missiles, frigates, armoured vehicles, helicopters, missile defence systems, and more are in the pipeline. Like the UK, the US also provides support, maintenance, and logistics to the Saudi Air Force, whose fleet is about half from the US and half from the UK.

It is not yet clear how far Biden will go in halting arms sales to Saudi Arabia, or how much pressure he will bring to bear on them to end the war in Yemen. But this is an issue on which US campaigners, like Codepink and Win Without War, could have real influence.

Any halt to US arms sales to Saudi would put the UK government in a highly embarrassing position, leaving it further isolated in its continued support for the cruel and brutal Yemen war.

Photo: Trump White House Archived | Source: Flickr



Biden comments on arms to Saudi Arabia

"I would end U.S. support for the disastrous Saudi-led war in Yemen and order a reassessment of our relationship with Saudi Arabia... President Trump has issued Saudi Arabia a dangerous blank check. Saudi Arabia has used it to extend a war in Yemen that has created the world's worst humanitarian crisis, pursue reckless foreign policy fights, and repress its own people."

(Submission to Council on Foreign Policy 1 August 2019)

"And I would make it very clear we were not going to, in fact, sell more weapons to them, we were going to, in fact, make them pay the price and make them, in fact, the pariah that they are."

(Democratic primary debate, 20 November 2019)

MARKING THE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARAB UPRISING

It's been a bumper decade for UK arms manufacturers since the "Arab spring" or "Arab uprising" depending on whether you're trying to convey an air of optimism and hope or more accurately describe what has followed 10 years of citizens' desperate revolt against autocratic regimes in the Middle East.

Seeking political and economic reform and an end to decades of poverty, food insecurity, unemployment and corrupt governance, demonstrators in Yemen, Bahrain, Egypt, Tunisia and Syria have faced brutal onslaughts from despotic regimes clinging to power and their foreign allies, including the UK, France, USA, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Iran, furthering their own agendas within the region – further preventing the development of independent universities, civil movement groups and unions as well as free and transparent media, religious and judicial bodies.

UK sales of weapons to the Middle East almost doubled in the five years that followed the uprisings. In 2011 average sales sat at £41.3m for small arms, £7m for ammunition and £34.3m for armoured vehicles increasing to £58.9m for small arms, £14m on ammunition and £59.6m for armoured vehicles by 2016.

Tunisia

The birth place of the so-called "Arab Spring" 10 years ago. Following the toppling of President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in 2011, it has held several elections, enshrining civil liberties and women's rights within its constitution, with citizens enjoying more freedom from the corruption and bribery that had previously shaped their lives. The population still faces unprecedented economic and social crisis (made worse by the ongoing pandemic) and hence Tunisians are amongst the largest group of refugees trying to reach Italy.

Libya

The UK supplied Gaddafi with £161 million worth of arms sales in the decade preceding the uprising (between 2000-2010). Furthermore, the UK armed and trained an elite Libyan army brigade named after and commanded by Gaddafi's son Khamis, responsible for a massacre of prisoners in August 2011. This means that when UK forces were deployed to support the removal of Gaddafi they were attacking those equipped with UK weapons only recently supplied.

The consequences of UK military action in Libya, as in Afghanistan and Iraq, have been disastrous with thousands of people being killed or injured, prolonged civil war and infrastructure reduced to rubble, leading to a catastrophic movement of refugees.

Egypt

Over 1,300 people were killed in the summer of 2013, following which, hundreds of people have either disappeared or been killed and thousands have been imprisoned under the rule of President Al-Sisi.

Amidst the targeting of journalists, human rights



Bahrain

With the UK opening its largest royal naval base outside the UK in Bahrain, sales to the regime totalled £45m between 2011-2015 compared with £6m worth of sales in the three years prior to the demonstrations. The Bahraini regime has further benefited from the support of the Saudi Arabian military, which protected oil sites in the aftermath of the 2011 protests, allowing Bahrain's security forces to oppress civilian protesters, many of whom remain in prison today.

Saudi

Despite being one of the world's most authoritarian regimes, Saudi remains the UK's number one arms customer. UK-made weapons have played a central role in the ongoing Saudi-led bombardment of Yemen. The war has put Yemen on the brink of the worst famine the world has seen in 100 years, with thousands dying from malnutrition, disease and poor health and 80% of the country's 24 million people currently in need of humanitarian aid and protection. Since the war began the UK has licensed £18 billion worth of arms to Saudi forces. This figure is definitely a severe underestimate though, as it does not include arms exported under the opaque Open Licensing system, which accounts for a majority of UK arms sales.

defenders, protestors, government critics and opposition parties, the UK approved at least 341 export licences between 2010 and 2018 including for small arms, aircrafts, tanks, armour, ammunition and explosive devices with a total value of £243million worth of sales.

The consequences of these sales and the utter devastation and destruction that continues today has resulted in the largest wave of refugees since World War II, permitting UK arms companies to further increase their profits in supplying UK border equipment under the guise of "security" in the shape of patrol ships, drones and razor wire fencing.

The consequences of these sales and the utter devastation and destruction that continues today has resulted in the largest wave of refugees since World War II

In marking, therefore, the 10-year anniversary of the Arab Spring, it is important to not only note the UK's role in supplying weapons to countries whose citizens took to the streets and who continue to suffer from the gravest of human rights abuses – notably in Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen and Libya – but equally important to recognise the UK's weapons sales for countries' complicit in perpetuating violence and human rights abuses beyond their borders, notably to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen.

Three Counties say no to the arms trade

Supporters of CAAT living in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire have come together to form a new group: Three Counties CAAT. Its aims are to seek an end to the arms trade and to stop Government support for arms exports. Initial activity is concerned with the proposed Three Counties Defence and Security Expo (3CDSE).

No to arms fairs in Malvern!

The 3CDSE scheduled to take place on 2 and 3 February at the Three Counties Showground, Malvern, has been postponed until 7 and 8 July.

At a recent meeting, Three Counties CAAT welcomed the postponement, which means that the event promoting the trade in weapons of war will not be held in Malvern in February. This was, plainly, good news but the failure to cancel the event remained a concern. Three Counties CAAT

believes it to be inappropriate to hold an arms fair in any month and hope the organisers cancel the Expo planned for July and hold no further events of this kind. This has happened in other venues around the country proposed for arms fairs (including most recently Liverpool, but also Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff and Glasgow)

Agriculture, arboriculture... armaments?

Attention was drawn to the Showground's charitable aim of promoting local agriculture, horticulture and arboriculture; in effect, to provide a place to celebrate what is good in the three counties. It was agreed that holding an event promoting the sale of armaments was not consistent with this aim. Because of the highly secretive nature of the Expo many residents of the

Three Counties will not be aware of this event and may well be horrified that it is taking place.

Rebecca Tully, coordinator of Three Counties CAAT and a long time arms trade campaigner, said "We are delighted the 3CDSE has been postponed and it should be forever, as holding an arms fair on a space for all the community, run by a Charity, is totally inappropriate. We don't want an arms fair here ever. This is not consistent with the charitable objectives of our local showground."

If you live in the area and want to get involved with Three Counties CAAT and the campaign against 3CDSE, or would like to start a CAAT group in your own area, please contact Kirsten Bayes our Local Outreach Coordinator outreach@caat.org.uk.

A YEAR OF CHANGE / STOP DSEI

2020 has indeed been a year of BIG changes for all of us, and our organisation is no exception. We've found ways to adjust to the challenges of working in a primarily digital landscape, we've adapted our approaches to disruption and resistance, and – as part of an organisational-wide review of strategy – we are looking ahead to the future, learning from the past, and considering how we can continue to be effective in our work as a campaigning organisation working to end the arms trade.

During the autumn, we conducted a series of roundtable consultations to find out from our supporters and activists what role they'd like to see CAAT play in future resistance to arms fairs across the country, and within the Stop the Arms Fair Network

itself. Taking on board feedback from those who engaged with the process as well as internal reflections here at CAAT, it is clear the best way for us to continue supporting our community of campaigners is to focus on capacity building.

Capacity Building

We will be moving away from leading on organising the DSEI Week of Action, and shift our focus towards supporting those who may wish to take action against arms fairs across the country throughout the year, in whatever form.

We will redistribute our focus, ensuring we are not only focused on the DSEI Arms Fair, but also on other local fairs, including the likes of Security & Policing (in March), DPRTE (in June) and Farnborough

(during non-DSEI years), be they online or in-person.

We will be offering a more robust training programme to equip our supporters with the skills they need to continue their resistance in the "real-world", as well as in our increasingly digital-world. Our Training & Events and Local Co-ordinators are working hard on designing this to have it ready for roll-out in the new year.

And, we will also be launching the Stop the Arms Fairs (STAFs) fund, which will be a pot of money available throughout the year for campaigners and organisers to apply to, in order to get the funds they need to take action, be it at DSEI or any other local arms fair

More details about these changes in the coming months.



FROM SCOTLAND WITH SHAME

Over the last decade, the Scottish government has poured millions of pounds worth of public money into companies that fuel conflict and support repression around the world, a fact that is often missing from political discourse on the UK arms trade.

We are shining a light on this complicity and support from Holyrood in our latest report *From Scotland With Shame*, an insight to the intimate relationship between the Scottish Government and the arms industry. It will also map the deep roots that arms companies like Raytheon and Leonardo have grown through Scottish villages and towns.

The public are told that this funding is to “aid diversification efforts” or for civil engineering projects despite the lack of monitoring of its actual use. These assurances mean very little when it still stands to benefit companies that profit from war and instability around the world. This was evident last year when an investigation by CAAT and the Sunday Mail confirmed that Scottish Enterprise money had been used by Leonardo to fund the development of military radars.

We have discovered Government agencies (e.g. Scottish Enterprise) are being used to facilitate high-

level meetings between Senior Scottish Ministers and arms industry “clients.” These range from Ministers being wined and dined by arms companies to MSPs hosting cosy evening receptions for arms companies within the Scottish Parliament itself. The death and destruction caused by the arms trade is not likely to have been on the agenda at any of these meetings.

We have discovered government agencies are being used to facilitate high-level meetings between Senior Scottish Ministers and arms industry “clients”

While the importance of Scottish arms manufacturing as part of the supply chain is sometimes overlooked, it is not insignificant. Raytheon is the 4th largest global arms company, and its Glenrothes factory is among the biggest in terms of its weapons production line outside the U.S. It recently received assistance from

the Scottish government for its expansion into Central Scotland.

Over 10% of the UK’s arms industry jobs are based in Scotland. These workers should be engaged by the Scottish Parliament to draw up practical plans for arms conversion to protect their employment and pay. We need to be considering the jobs that will actually benefit Scottish communities and promote the growth of more sustainable industries.

The next Scottish Parliament election is fast approaching, and with it comes the chance to demand transparency in the investments of the public purse and for Scotland to become a leader in defence diversification and ethical policies, as it claims to be.

***From Scotland With Shame* will be available on our website soon. There will be an accompanying panel discussion at the It Starts Here event in March 2021 (see page 14).**

ARMS TRADE OFF CAMPUS

If there's one thing the last year has taught us, it's that there is incredible power in student organising.

Across the country, we have seen students refusing to be treated like cash cows by institutions committed to a neo-liberal vision of education. Students have organised occupations and rent strikes, and galvanised large numbers of their peers to hold their institutions to account. But what's the link between universities exploiting their students and universities supporting the arms trade? Both stem from the same problem: higher education continues to prioritise profit over people.

Higher education is not a politically neutral space. Built

on the legacy of colonialism, it is no surprise that universities are sites of oppression, with our campuses becoming hot spots for police brutality, transphobia, and rape culture. Just as organising on campus must be multifaceted if it is to uplift and protect the most marginalised

Built on the legacy of colonialism, it is no surprise that universities are sites of oppression, with our campuses becoming hot spots for police brutality, transphobia, and rape culture

students, our organising around militarism and imperialism must do the same if it is to support the most vulnerable in our global community. From gentrification to wars and illegal occupations abroad, universities reproduce violence both locally and globally. This means that demilitarisation needs to be a priority for everyone, whether you're a feminist, a climate justice campaigner, or a Black Lives Matter activist, demilitarisation affects us all.

With that in mind, I really hope to widen the range of students the Universities Network interacts with this year. I appreciate this is a really difficult year for all students, so I'm hoping to provide upskilling workshops to student groups that they can use for any form of campus organising. I'm also excited to revive the Universities Network social media, making it easier for you to learn about campaigning against the arms trade when you're stuck at home. If there's anything in particular you'd like to see from the Universities Network, do get in contact with me as I'm very open to ideas!



Photo: Global Justice Now | Source: Flickr

Introducing Malak

Malak Mayet is the new Universities Coordinator. Despite local and national restrictions, universities have been open since September, and arms companies are still doing everything they can to increase their influence on them. Malak is working with students across the country to resist militarism on campuses, both physically and virtually, as well as training student activists in the core skills they need to confront arms dealers and their universities head on.

Malak has spent the last four

years organising within the student movement. As previous BME officer of the University of Nottingham, they co led the demilitarise campaign, drawing links between militarism and institutional racism within the HE sector. During their year representing disabled students within the NUS, they focussed on encouraging disabled students to think about militarism as a disability rights issue.

You can contact Malak on malak@caat.org.uk.



FIVE WAYS CAAT TOOK ON THE ARMS TRADE IN 2020

2020 was a year like no other but together we still had significant success in our campaigning – here are five ways we took on the arms trade last year.

1 Taking the UK government to court (again)

In October CAAT launched a new legal challenge to stop the sale of UK weapons to the Saudi-led coalition for use in the war in Yemen. This follows our initial Court of Appeal win in 2019, which meant hundreds of millions of pounds worth of UK arms sales were put on hold. The Government has since resumed issuing arms export licences for use in the war in Yemen.

2021 will see CAAT back in court. Our action will continue until we stop these sales once and for all.

2 Making the news

CAAT's work featured in over 1,100 articles last year. A piece in The Observer was instrumental in persuading broadcaster Clare Balding not to attend or speak at an annual gala dinner hosted by the arms industry.

4 Stopping arms fairs

The pandemic did not stop arms fairs from going ahead nor did it prevent local groups from trying to stop them. Just one example was Liverpool Against the Electronic Arms Fair which succeeded not only in having "Electronic Warfare 2020" cancelled but, following a barrage of over 40,000 emails and a video by Alexei Sayle, convinced Liverpool's Mayor to implement an ethical charter ensuring that such events will not take place in the city again, this shows the impact local campaigns can have.

The pandemic did not stop arms fairs from going ahead nor did it prevent local groups from trying to stop them

5 Adapting arms trade activism during a pandemic

CAAT ran a number of popular virtual events last year including an "Arms Trade Research 101" training session and an "Arms Trade 101 & Intersecting Issues" panel discussion that attracted over 500 sign-ups worldwide. This event was followed by our very first six-week reading series exploring how the arms trade links to a range of issues including policing, militarised borders and the UK's ongoing relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Thank you for all your support in 2020. If you are in a position to make a donation to CAAT today, you'll be helping to make sure we can keep up campaigning like this in 2021.

You can make a donation by visiting caat.org.uk/donate or by filling out the form on the back page.

3 Uncovering UK complicity in police violence around the world

An investigation by CAAT and The Independent in June revealed that the UK had licensed at least £34 million worth of tear gas sales to some of the world's most abusive regimes.

Following the killing of George Floyd and the US police's violent repression of Black Lives Matter protesters, CAAT called on the UK government to immediately suspend the sale of tear gas, riot shields and rubber bullets to the United States. Campaign messages from CAAT supporters reached 98% of MPs.





IT STARTS HERE

Our biennial It Starts Here Conference returns for another year – this time revamped!

Taking place from Friday 19th March to Sun 21st March, at the end of Israeli Apartheid Week, and with the Sunday being the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, we’ve designed an ambitious, exciting, and educational interactive programme that will bring together much of our work in previous years as we continue to understand the arms trade as inextricably linked to other intersecting issues.

And we’re taking things digital (of course!).

We’ve designed an ambitious, exciting, and educational interactive programme which will bring together much of our work in previous years

The 2019 edition of It Starts Here saw us gather in person at Resource For London (now that does feel like a long time ago!) to listen to panels and talks on issues as diverse and varied as anti-racism, migrant solidarity, climate justice and the arms trade; economics, jobs, “just transition”, nuclear disarmament, unions, austerity and the arms trade and we also focused on the London borough of Newham, where the DSEI arms fair takes place bi-annually. We also curated

workshops and trainings in sustainable organising, using social media as an activist, and, of course, Know Your Rights Tasters to name just a few.

Two years later – in a dramatically different socio-political landscape, it’s fair to say – you can expect some of the old familiars, alongside much that nods to CAAT’s commitment to grow and change as the world does.

We are excited to launch with an event on Friday evening: an opening panel marking 10 years since the Arab uprisings, drawing parallels with the Black Lives Matter Civil Rights Movements from 2013 to the present, with last year’s peak of activity causing powerful reverberations globally. Our speakers (soon to be confirmed) will reflect on the nature of repression worldwide and how the UK and other arms dealing governments continue to arm it. Other panels taking place across our Saturday programme will include Scotland and its relationship to the arms trade; exploring how we demilitarise education; how we Rethink Security; and reflecting on the role of art and creativity in our resistance.

And as part of our commitment to capacity building and working with supporters and activists in a

more decentralised way, on Sunday there will be a full day of workshops and trainings aiming to upskill our activists to campaign in a digital world, while also preparing us to resume our in-person work once the world opens up again. Expect workshops in Citizen Journalism, Online Facilitation, Ad-Hacking, Media training and our hugely popular Arms Trade Research 101 as well as, of course, a Know Your Rights Taster.

The panel events will be livestreamed, as well as BSL interpreted, and there will be lots of breaks between sessions to relieve zoom fatigue!

Although there’s nothing quite like being together in the flesh and the ongoing challenges we all face are still a mountain to climb, we continue to take comfort in the opportunities this new way of working has brought us, as well as the many ways we’ve been able to engage with supporters across the UK and all over the world thanks to digital.

Keep an eye on the CAAT website for more updates and announcements regarding It Starts Here 2021, including booking information and the full programme. For now, pop the dates in your diary and we’ll see you there!

People Not War podcast

“People Not War” is a podcast brought to you by Campaign Against Arms Trade.

Hosted by writer, producer, campaigner and our very own Training & Events Co-ordinator, Siana Bangura, in each episode we catch up with campaigners, activists, community organisers, and all-round inspirational people working to end the

international arms trade and other intersecting issues.

Throughout the series, we’ll be drawing links between the arms trade and issues as broad as border controls and policing, colonialism, the crisis in Yemen, the militarisation of education, and climate justice, to name just a few, with the hope of showing that all these struggles are interconnected.

Guests include Aderonke Apata, Amina Atiq, Sham Murad, Melina Villeneuve, and Sarona Bedwan.

Listen to “People Not War” on Acast, iTunes, Spotify, Soundcloud and wherever else you enjoy tuning in!

Follow us on Instagram (@caatuk) for updates and use the hashtag #PNWpodcaat to join the conversation!

THEY SAID IT

“I’m not saying the military’s in love with me, but the soldiers are. The top people in the Pentagon probably aren’t, because they want to do nothing but fight wars so that all of those wonderful companies that make the bombs and make the planes and make everything else stay happy”

Former President Donald Trump, the Independent, 08/09/2020

“Under Trump, America’s nuclear weapons industry has boomed”

LA Times headline, 23/12/2020

“I know there is concern that defense spending will go way down if there is a Biden administration. And frankly, I just think that’s ridiculous”

Raytheon CEO Greg Haynes, Investors.com, 05/11/2020

Taking action

Dates for your diary

Feb 11th ➔ **Online Facilitation 101**

Feb 18th ➔ **Online Decision-Making 101**

Feb 24th ➔ **Building a Simple website on Wordpress Workshop (TBC)**

Mar 9th – 11th ➔ **Security & Policing Arms Fair Online**

Mar 15th – 21st ➔ **Israeli Apartheid Week**

Mar 19th – 21st ➔ **It Starts Here Weekend**

For the latest updates and booking information, head to: www.caat.org.uk/events

Introducing Jayde

Jayde Bradley is CAAT’s new Supporter Development Coordinator. She joins CAAT from campaigning journalism start-up Scram News – a personal highlight of her time there was delivering a giant P45 with Boris Johnson’s name on it to Downing Street.

She has over ten years’ experience working in supporter engagement and campaigning across a range of issues, including helping to secure the release of anti-slavery activists trapped in Qatar and generating support in the European parliament to tackle the conflict minerals trade.

Jayde will be monitoring CAAT’s enquiries inbox so you can get in touch with her on enquiries@caat.org.uk



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:

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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.

A donation of £10 a month makes a real difference and helps us plan our future work.

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