

# CAAT NEWS

The quarterly magazine for Campaign Against Arms Trade

Issue 265

Spring 2023



## Stop arming Saudi war crimes

### PLUS

Human rights in Saudi Arabia P6

Sportswashing in Qatar P11

Defend the right to boycott P14



CAMPAIGN  
AGAINST  
ARMS  
TRADE

The last few months have been really busy for CAAT. We've been preparing for our day in Court, with the next stage of ongoing legal challenge against UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia. You can find out more throughout this issue.

We are delighted to have new faces joining us. On page 15 you can meet Emily and Charles who are the latest additions to the CAAT team and who will play a key role in us going from strength to strength.

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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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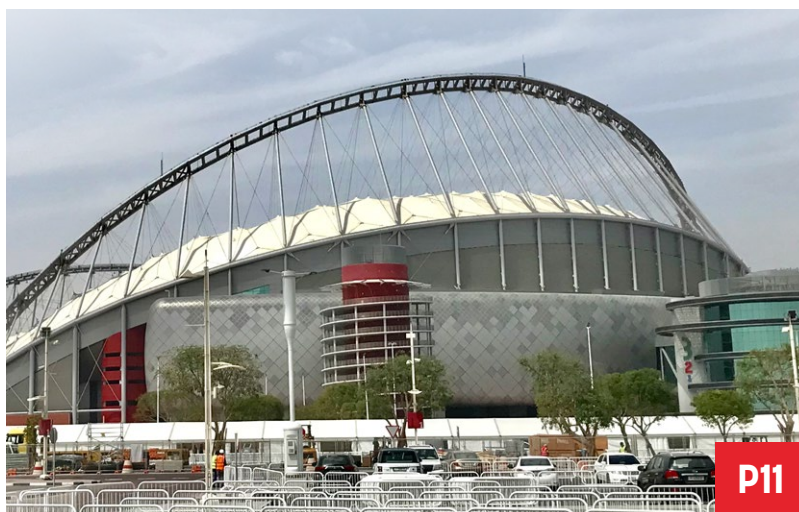


Photo: G.T Travels | Source: Flickr



Source: Library of Congress (Source)

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# YEMEN

**We have been back in court as part of our ongoing case to stop the immoral and illegal UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen. You can read more about the case and the latest update on P8–9.**

The work we are doing in court is vital, but it is only one part of the campaign and the action we are taking to end these deadly arms sales.

This January, over 1,200 CAAT supporters took action by contacting their MPs telling them about our case. The emails and letters that were sent asked MPs to sign Early Day Motion 771: “UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen.”

As a result of your work, 57 MPs from across a range of opposition parties have now called for an end to UK support for the war. The EDM also called for a suspension of UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia and for the UK government to use all diplomatic means at its disposal to support the role of the Yemeni people, including women and children, in building sustainable peace.

Thank you for pushing your representatives to speak out on Yemen and for helping to show the strength of feeling there is in Parliament for ending arms sales to the Saudi-led Coalition.

In January CAAT also hosted a briefing in Parliament. MPs in attendance heard from a range of different speakers, including Katie Fallon from CAAT, Martin Butcher of Oxfam, Sarah al-Areqi, a Yemeni researcher at the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, and Niku Jafarnia, a Yemen and Bahrain Researcher at Human Rights Watch.

*This January, over 1,200 CAAT supporters took action by contacting their MPs telling them about our case.*

*As a result of your work, 57 MPs from across a range of opposition parties have now called for an end to UK support for the war*

While there, we had a chance to discuss the vital work being done to ensure accountability for violations of human rights in Yemen, the situation for civil society operating in the country, and the key issues within the UK arms export regime that

risk complicity in human rights violations.

Parliamentary arithmetic may not favour us, but it is, and always will be, a vital platform for getting answers, providing scrutiny and exposing the hypocrisy at the heart of the arms industry and the UK government’s role in it.

Since the last issue of CAAT News we have seen a new Conservative government taking office, but it will follow the same failed arms export policy which has fueled atrocities and instability around the world, particularly in Yemen. In fact one of those who was most responsible for the arms sales, the former Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, is now the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We cannot allow them to continue with business as usual.

**We are now eight years on from the invasion, and it is more vital than ever that we have accountability and that Yemen is not forgotten.**

# ARMS TRADE SHORTS

## Turkey

Photo: Astro media Org. Lidl | Source: Wikimedia



According to the Turkish military procurement agency, 2022 saw the value of the country's defence and aerospace exports passing \$4 billion for the first time. Much of the growth is thought to be down to aerospace and drone technology.

**Defense News, 30/12/2022**

According to Middle East Eye, sources have told them about talks between Turkey and the UK about the former possibly buying a large package of weapons, including fighter jets and frigates. Turkey is already a major buyer of UK-made arms.

**Middle East Eye, 20/01/2023**

Research from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has found that Israeli and Turkish arms companies saw the highest growth in weapons sales of any in the world. The last 20 years have seen a tenfold growth in the Turkish arms industry.

**Middle East Eye, 05/12/2022**

## Australia

Australia is set to spend more than \$1bn on new naval missiles and a US rocket artillery system. According to the Australian defence ministry, this is the "largest expansion of army strike capability in living memory."

**The Guardian, 04/01/2023**

## UAVs

Switzerland has received the first two of six Hermes 900 Heavy Fuel Engine drones from Israeli arms company Elbit Systems. The deal, thought to be worth \$270 million, was agreed in 2015.

**Overt Defence, 03/02/2023**

## USA

According to the U.S. State Department, the value of US military equipment exports increased by 49% to \$205.6 billion in the latest fiscal year. Notable sales included tanks to Poland, fighter jets to Indonesia and combat ships to Greece.

**Reuters, 25/01/2023**

US Senators are threatening to block the sale of 40 F-16 fighter jets to Turkey until Sweden and Finland have been allowed to join NATO. This follows moves by the Turkish government to block the two countries from joining.

**Defense News, 02/02/2023**

## South Korea

The value of South Korean arms exports reached \$17 billion in November. This is \$10 billion ahead of last year's then record sales. A recent deal with Poland accounted for \$12.4 billion worth of sales, while a deal with Egypt accounted for a \$1.7 billion worth.

**Washington Post 23/12/2022**



Photo: Republic of Korea Armed Forces | Source: Wikimedia

## Global arms sales

New SIPRI data shows that the total military sales of the top 100 global arms and military service companies increased by nearly 2% in 2021. It was the seventh consecutive year of increases and includes domestic sales as well as exports.

**ABC News, 05/12/2022**

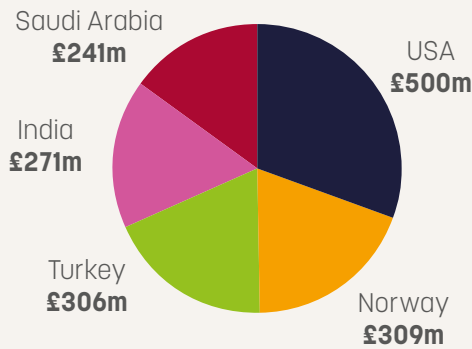
## China

New statistics from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has shown that eight Chinese arms companies have made the world's top 100 arms companies by sales. Together they accounted for \$109 billion worth of arms sales in 2021, up 6.5% from 2020.

**South China Morning Post, 05/12/2022**

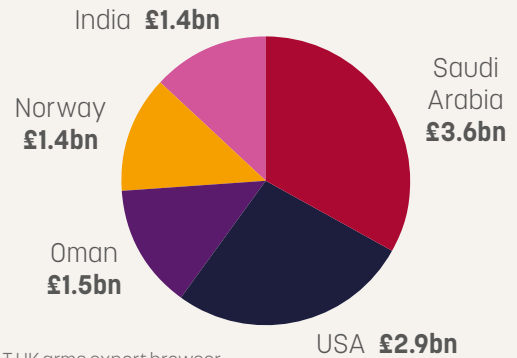
New figures from the latest CAAT report show longer term trends in the UK arms industry. The report shows that the majority of UK arms sales go to human rights abusing regimes and forces. You can read the full report at [caat.org.uk/publications/uk-arms-export-in-2021/](https://caat.org.uk/publications/uk-arms-export-in-2021/)

**The top 5 recipients of SIELs by value in 2021 were:**



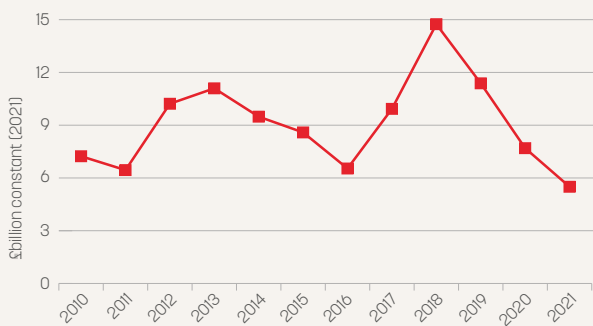
From CAAT UK arms export browser, based on Export Control Joint Unit statistics.

**The top 5 recipients of SIELs by value over the 5-year period 2017–21 were:**



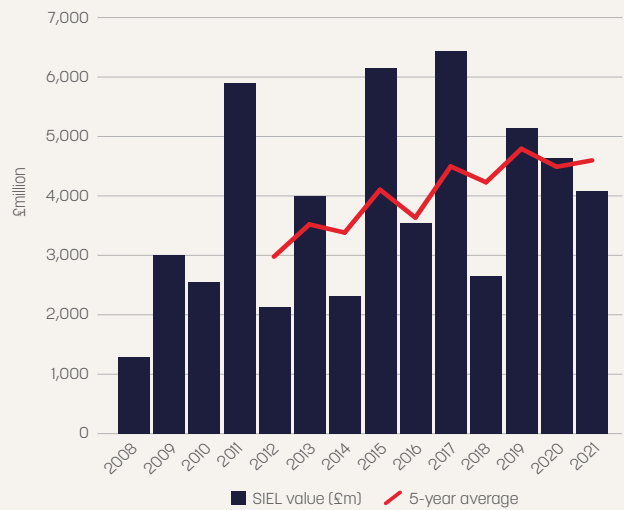
From CAAT UK arms export browser, based on Export Control Joint Unit statistics.

**The value of arms export contracts won by UK companies in 2021 was **£5.5 billion**, a fall of 27% compared with 2020**



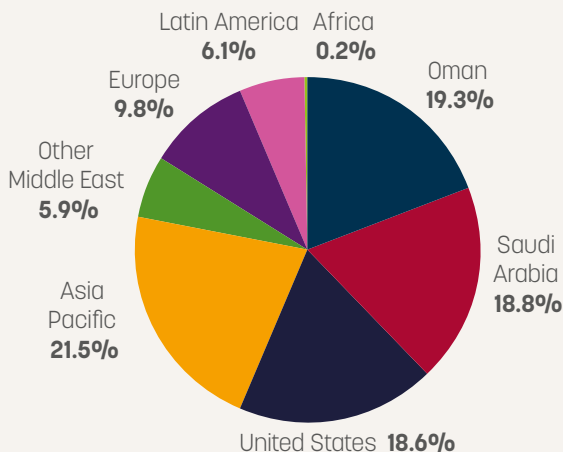
From UK Defence & Security Exports

**Value of SIEL arms export licences 2008–2021**



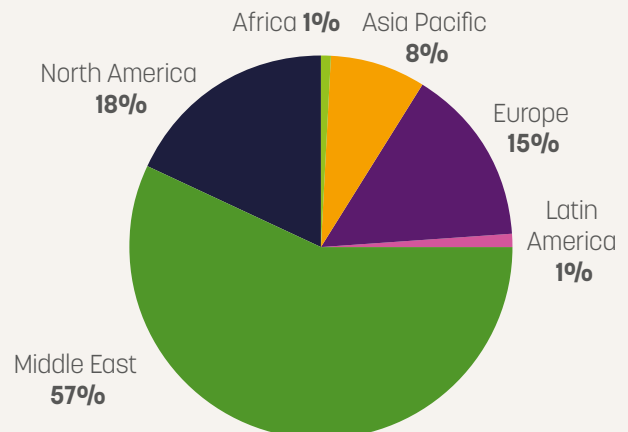
From CAAT UK arms export browser, based on Export Control Joint Unit statistics.

The three largest recipients of UK major conventional weapons exports from 2017–21 were Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the USA, each receiving 19% of UK exports. The Asia Pacific region accounted for 21.5% of UK exports.



Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

The dominant recipient region for UK arms exports during 2012–21 based on the value of contracts was the Middle East with 57%, followed by North America with 18%, and Europe with 15%.



Source: UK Defence & Security Export Statistics

# HUMAN RIGHTS IN SAUDI ARABIA

CAAT's campaign against arms sales to Saudi Arabia has focused on the use of these arms in the devastating war in Yemen. But UK and western arms supplies also help prop up the brutal dictatorship of the ruling House of Saud.

Far from being the "reformer" he presents himself as, the Saudi ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has recently overseen increased repression of activists, and a shocking wave of executions.

By the end of November 2022, Saudi Arabia had carried out at least 148 executions. This included the mass execution of 81 men on 12 March, on charges ranging from "terrorism" to "holding deviant beliefs".

Half of those killed were members of the Shia minority, who had taken part in demonstrations calling for greater political participation. In November, they carried out a wave of at least 20 executions for drug-related offences, breaking a 2021 promise to end the death penalty in such cases.

The Saudi judicial system lacks meaningful due process for defendants, and routinely relies on confessions extracted using torture.

Jordanian national Hussein Abu Al-Kheir remains on death row on trumped up drug smuggling charges. In December, a UK minister, unusually, condemned the "abhorrent" torture of Al Kheir – but a few days later, he had these comments struck from the Parliamentary record, underlining the UK's deference to Saudi Arabia.

In December 2022, London-based, Saudi-focused human rights group Alqst released a report detailing extensive UK-Saudi ties, including arms sales, and how the refusal of the UK to speak up enables Saudi abuses. The report urges the UK government to make much more robust use of its ties with Saudi to press for human rights.

CAAT's Sam Perlo-Freeman spoke at a Parliamentary launch event for the report, alongside speakers including Alqst founder, Saudi dissident Yahya Assiri, and Lina al-Hathloul, Alqst activist and sister of Saudi women's rights activist Loujain al-Hathloul, who was imprisoned and tortured for her dissent, and remains under a travel ban.

*In August, Salma al-Shehab, a Saudi women's rights activist and PhD student at Leeds University, was sentenced to 34 years imprisonment for peaceful activity on Twitter*

Al-Hathloul responded to the UK government's repeated assurances that the best approach to Saudi rights cases was quiet, private, diplomacy, saying how this has consistently failed, and it was only when cases such as her sister's became the subject of public outcry that movement was seen.

Several extreme sentences for dissenters made the news in 2022.

In August, Salma al-Shehab, a Saudi women's rights activist and PhD student at Leeds University, was sentenced to 34 years imprisonment for peaceful activity on Twitter.

Days later, Nourah bint Saeed al-Qahtani was sentenced to 45 years in prison for "using the Internet to tear the [country's] social fabric" and "violating the public order by using social media," again for tweeting her opinions. Both were sentenced under "counter-terrorism" laws.

Meanwhile, three members of the Huwaitat tribe were sentenced to death and two were given 50-year prison sentences for peacefully resisting their family's eviction to make way for the planned new megacity of Neom.

The UK's close military, security, and political relationship with Saudi Arabia and its silence on human rights abuses strengthens the power and legitimacy of this egregious regime, undermining the UK's claim to be an upholder of human rights worldwide.

**Alqst's report, "A soft touch? Human rights and the UK-Saudi relationship," is available on their website: [alqst.org/en](https://alqst.org/en)**



The image shows the cover of a report titled "A Soft Touch? Human Rights and the UK-Saudi Relationship" by ALQST. The cover features a photograph of two men sitting in a room, one in a suit and one in traditional Saudi attire. The ALQST logo is in the top right corner. The text on the cover includes the title, the organization's name, and the date "December 2022". A small photo credit is visible at the bottom of the image: "Photo by Simon Walker / No 10 Downing Street, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0".



## UK AND SAUDI ARMS SALES – A LONG AND TOXIC RELATIONSHIP

Unfortunately, UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia have been going on for decades.

It was 1966 when the UK government founded its arms export promotion unit, a civil service department dedicated to maximising arms sales.

Right from the start the focus was on securing sales to the Middle East, with Iran and Saudi Arabia in particular buying large quantities of UK weapons. Following the Iranian revolution, and the breakdown in UK-Iran relations, Saudi Arabia firmly cemented its status as the UK's largest buyer.

Throughout the 1980s the Government continued in its role in pushing and promoting the industry. The then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, was a particularly strong supporter and played a central role in securing a fighter jet deal with Saudi Arabia that would ultimately be worth £42 billion.

The deal, known as the Al-Yamamah deal, would become the subject of a Serious Fraud Office investigation. This followed accusations of bribery and corruption.

The potentially embarrassing investigation was cancelled by

Tony Blair, a move which was soon followed by the announcement of another major aircraft deal worth billions of pounds. Many of the Eurofighter aircraft sold as part of Blair's deal are still being used today in the bombing of Yemen.

*With every atrocity and abuse the Saudi rulers have known that they can depend on the full support and loyalty of subsequent UK governments, whether Labour or Tory*

David Cameron continued the longstanding policy of uncritical support for the industry and for sales to the Middle East in particular. During his tenure he made high-profile visits to Saudi Arabia and UAE in order to push for arms sales.

In 2014 there was a dispute between the UK and Saudi Arabia relating to the pricing of fighter jet sales. This required further diplomacy and negotiations. The then Prince Charles paid a visit to the Saudi regime, where he performed a traditional sword dance at an arms industry

sponsored event. The next morning it was announced that an agreement had been reached.

The Government doesn't just work as a middleman between arms companies and buyers. It also plays a central role in securing contracts and organising events like the DSEI arms fair, which happens in London every two years. These bring the world's largest arms companies together with some of the most oppressive regimes, including Saudi military buyers.

This hasn't just provided military support to the Saudi dictatorship, it has also provided a great deal of political support. With every atrocity and abuse the Saudi rulers have known that they can depend on the full support and loyalty of subsequent UK governments, whether Labour or Tory.

At present almost two thirds of UK arms exports are going to the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia being by far the largest buyer. It is firmly at the heart of the UK arms trade, regardless of the terrible consequences for people in Saudi Arabia and Yemen.



# CAAT IS BACK IN COURT

On 31 January, CAAT returned to the Royal Courts of Justice to once again challenge the UK government over its arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in the war in Yemen. We believe these sales to be illegal as well as immoral.

The case is CAAT's second Judicial Review against the Government on this issue, following the successful case we brought in 2019, temporarily halting new arms licences to the Saudi regime and the rest of the coalition that has bombed Yemen.

Saudi Arabia has led a coalition of states carrying out a brutal bombing campaign in Yemen since March 2015, in support of the official government against the Houthi rebels who control the capital Sana'a and most of the north of the country.

The Saudi coalition has regularly bombed civilian targets including hospitals, schools, homes, market places, weddings, funerals, food and water facilities and even a school bus full of children. These attacks have killed at least 9000 civilians, while being a major contributing factor to the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe.

In total, the United Nations estimates that the war in Yemen

had killed 377,000 people by the end of 2021, through direct and indirect causes.

Since the start of the war, the UK has sold over £23 billion worth of arms to Saudi Arabia – including combat aircraft, bombs and missiles, and a constant supply of spare parts, maintenance, and technical support for the Saudi Air Force.

*The horrific human toll should have been reason enough for the sales to end, but the Government put the interests of the arms industry first*

The horrific human toll should have been reason enough for the sales to end, but the Government put the interests of the arms industry first, as it so often does.

Nonetheless, the Government must obey its own laws on arms export licences, one clause of which says that a licence shall not be approved "if there is a clear risk that the items might be used

to commit serious violations of International Humanitarian Law" (IHL – the "laws of war"). Arms sales to Saudi for use in Yemen seem to clearly breach this.

So how did we get here? As long-term supporters will know, CAAT first brought legal action way back in March 2016, seeking a Judicial Review of the Government's decisions to continue arming Saudi Arabia.

The High Court rejected CAAT's case in 2017, but in June 2019 the Court of Appeal overturned this decision, ruling that the Government's approach to deciding on these licences was "irrational and therefore unlawful," and required them to retake them.

Specifically, as part of their assessment of a "clear risk" the Government had to investigate the hundreds of past allegations of IHL violations by the Saudi coalition, something they had not done. Meanwhile, the Government agreed that it would not issue new licences.





Unfortunately, in July 2020, the Government announced that they had completed their review, and stated that while they had found a “small number” of “possible violations” of IHL, these were “isolated incidents” that did not involve any pattern leading to a clear risk of future violations. Thus arms sales could continue as before. The review was published by the then Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

What she said seemed, on the face of it, to fly in the face of the vast body of evidence of attacks on civilians from numerous UN expert reports, and by Yemeni and international NGOs, based on their own detailed investigations on the ground.

So CAAT has also challenged this decision, arguing that the Government had no reasonable basis for reaching its conclusions. In non-legal terms, we believe that their investigation into past allegations is a whitewash.

CAAT received permission to bring this second Judicial Review in April 2021, but multiple delays

mean it has only just come to court. CAAT is supported by interventions from Oxfam and the Yemeni-based Mwatana for Human Rights, both of which have provided copious evidence of patterns of violations.

On the eve of the hearing, on 30th January, CAAT held a vigil outside the Royal Courts of Justice, which included a powerful reading by Scouse-Yemeni poet Amina Atiq, and the reading of names of Yemeni civilians killed in two particular Saudi coalition airstrikes.

A notable feature of the case is that half the hearing – and a great deal of the Government’s evidence – is being kept secret, for reasons of national security and relations with Saudi Arabia.

Even CAAT’s lawyers do not get to see it. In these closed hearings, CAAT is represented by two Special Advocates with the required security clearance, who get to view and challenge the secret evidence.

Nonetheless, the open hearings, and the open evidence did much to reveal how the Government had carried out its flawed process.

CAAT’s lead Counsel, Ben Jaffey KC, pointed to the strong dependence of the UK government on reports by the Saudi-led Coalition’s internal investigation body, the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT).

*The moral outrage and absurdity of continuing to approve arms sales that have fueled such repression and led to such massive death and destruction is glaringly obvious*

It appears (though the details are “closed”), that without a JIAT report on an incident, the Government decided there was “insufficient information” to assess if an attack harming civilians was even a “possible” violation of IHL, however much robust evidence was available from other sources. In effect Saudi-led forces were being asked to assess themselves for war crimes.

Half of all “credible” allegations attributed to Saudi Arabia were placed in the “insufficient information” category. The investigation also ignored allegations involving attacks by Saudi helicopters.

On the question of “patterns” of violations, Jaffey argued that there was a very clear pattern, ignored by the Government, of Saudi Arabia repeatedly failing to follow its own rules of engagement. An email by an unnamed Government official, revealed in Government evidence, even made the point that the Government’s reasoning on the lack of a pattern was circular.

Sir James Eadie KC, for the Government, argued that they had carried out an extremely thorough process, involving military and legal experts, using a wide range of information. This inevitably involved making numerous judgement calls, which it is the Government’s job to make, and that can only be overturned by the courts if they were clearly irrational. He submitted that CAAT had not demonstrated such irrationality.

The open hearing concluded at lunchtime on 1st February, followed by the closed hearing, which was expected to last through 2nd February. A judgement is expected to take 2-6 months, with a strong possibility of the case going to appeal thereafter.

CAAT has a very high bar to reach to win this case. It is not enough to convince the judges that the Government’s decision is wrong, rather, we also have to convince them that it was so unreasonable that they were not legally entitled to make such a decision.

We believe we have made a very strong case for this. But regardless of the outcome, the moral outrage and absurdity of continuing to approve arms sales that have fueled such repression and led to such massive death and destruction is glaringly obvious, and CAAT will continue to oppose this both in court and out.

# SOLIDARITY WITH YEMEN DAY OF ACTION

On Saturday December 3rd, people all across the UK took to the streets and to their local arm factories, as part of the Solidarity with Yemen Day of Action. The day of action was part of a broader campaign in the lead up to our Court Case.

Those who took part in the action were doing so to raise awareness of UK complicity in the war on Yemen and to stand in support of those affected by the brutal war and the humanitarian crisis it has fuelled.

Protestors were also trying to highlight that there are arms companies based in their local area that are fuelling the war on Yemen – companies such as Leonardo, Raytheon, BAE Systems, Airbus, Thales and Rolls Royce.

We saw a wide range of actions take place all over the UK. Overall, there were actions in 15 locations across Scotland, Wales and England. Families, friends, students and local communities came out with colourful banners, and stood against arms sales and in solidarity with the people of Yemen.



A local group from Preston took action at the BAE factory in Warton, where the Typhoons are made.



In Bristol, protestors took a tour around the six arms companies based in Bristol, including the Rolls Royce site, where the EJ200 Typhoon engine is made. They brought their peace sculpture and arms to renewables sculpture to all the arms companies.



Lancaster university took part on their campus, highlighting arms companies' involvement in their university as well as the war on Yemen.

Activists take action outside the L3Harris factory in Brighton. It is one of many companies that have armed the Saudi regime



# SPORTSWASHING IN QATAR

The Qatari World Cup was one of the most controversial global sporting events for a long time.

With big money and international broadcasting rights, it provided a powerful global platform and propaganda vehicle to a dictatorship that has been keen to use sportswashing and soft power to improve its reputation.

The images that were projected around the world will have served to boost the Qatari regime and aid its attempts to gain international respectability.

The reality is very different. The stadiums and facilities themselves were built on the exploitation of migrant workers. In an interview, the man responsible for overseeing the project, Hassan al-Thawadi, the secretary general of the Supreme Committee for delivery and legacy, admitted that up to 500 workers had died in preparations for the event.

The Qatari regime is far from alone in this kind of activity. Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates are among those that are also using the global appeal of football to improve their image. This has

been most evident in the recent sale of Newcastle United Football Club to a conglomerate led and funded by Saudi royalty.

*The UK and Qatar have a broader military relationship that even includes a shared air squadron based at RAF Leeming in Yorkshire*

One outcome from the World Cup is that it put Qatari human rights under the microscope in a way that was new, highlighting the experience of the LGBTQ+ community in Qatar, who live under some of the most authoritarian laws in the world.

Despite its shocking human rights record and the repression on display, one government that has been all too happy to support the Qatari rulers is that of the UK. There is a tight political and military relationship between the two countries, bolstered by a soaring arms trade.

Since the Tories were elected in

May 2010, the UK has licenced at least £3.4 billion worth of lethal weaponry to the Qatari military and police. This included fighter jets, as well as licences for bombs, small arms and ammunition.

Equipment approved for export included machine guns, ammunition, weapon sights, assault rifles and “anti-riot” shields.

The UK and Qatar have a broader military relationship that even includes a shared air squadron based at RAF Leeming in Yorkshire. There is also a long-term contract in place to provide Eurofighter jets, the same kind of aircraft that is currently being used by Saudi-led forces in Yemen.

These arms sales and this relationship help to bolster the repressive apparatus that has been established in Qatar and to maintain the strength and power of the Qatari state, regardless of the abuses that it inflicts on migrant workers and Qatari people.





## BAHRAIN

Bahraini activist Ali Mushaima protests outside the Bahrain embassy in London

**There are few political relationships as toxic and riddled with hypocrisy as the one between the UK government and the Bahraini regime.**

For decades now, successive UK governments have armed and supported Bahraini forces while willingly ignoring the torture and abuses that it has inflicted on human rights defenders.

The relationship is explored in *Exiles vs Oligarchs*, a new documentary produced by our friends at Declassified, an investigative journalism outlet with a particular focus on foreign policy.

The film tells the story of Bahraini exiles living in the UK and the work they are doing from the UK to keep their dreams of a democratic Bahrain alive.

With often harrowing accounts of abuse and violence against protesters and their families, this film centres Bahraini experiences and offers an important voice to people who have endured great injustice and brutality at the hands of the regime.

One story we hear is that of Ali Mushaima, the son of Hassan Mushaima who has been imprisoned since 2011 in brutal conditions for his role in the 'Arab Spring' protests and his opposition to the Bahraini Royal Family.

The film opens with footage from 2016 of another exile, Sayed Alwadaei, being dragged away by police after jumping on a limo as it makes its way into Downing Street.

In the limo was the King of Bahrain, Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, who was on his way to meet the then Prime Minister Theresa May. It's hard to think of a more fitting representation of the moral bankruptcy and complicity at the heart of the relationship and the UK's role in the wider region.

*Despite the horrific reality of the relationship, the film is not without hope. It tells a story of bold resistance in the face of huge adversity.*

Nothing has changed since. Towards the end of the film there is footage from an utterly excruciating parliamentary evidence session in which the former Prime Minister and foreign secretary, Liz Truss, is unable to provide a single example of when she has raised human rights concerns when speaking to a Gulf Monarchy.

What becomes very clear

throughout is the closeness of the relationship to the UK and the impunity that Bahraini royalty and their oligarch friends can enjoy there. The film charts the relationship with the UK Royal Family, Sandhurst and other powerful and elitist UK institutions.

It also puts the UK's role in Bahrain in its wider context, exploring the UK's relationships with Oman, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. The exiles are calling for solidarity and have taken part in actions against the Saudi-led bombing of Yemen and other human rights atrocities.

Despite the horrific reality of the relationship, the film is not without hope. It tells a story of bold resistance in the face of huge adversity. But it is also a very human film, and lays bare the terrible toll on Ali, Sayed and everyone else who is campaigning against autocracy and for a peaceful and democratic Bahrain.

**You can see this film and others at [Youtube.com/@DeclassifiedUK](https://www.youtube.com/@DeclassifiedUK)**

# LOCAL GROUPS

## Blooms Not Bombs! No to 3CDSE Arms Fair

Campaigners from across Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire came together in Malvern town centre to say no to November's 3CDSE 2022 arms fair.

They were joined by peace campaigners from Birmingham and South Wales, who have had their own experience seeing off arms fairs, as well as musicians from Stroud Red Band.

3CDSE which bills itself as a "leading event" for the special operations and intelligence community is hosted by the Three Counties Showground and supported by major arms companies such as BAE Systems, Qinetiq and Thales. The Showground, an agricultural charity that should be promoting farming and horticulture, is consequently mixed up with promoting death and destruction around the world.

Three Counties CAAT said, "To the Showground our message has been clear for over 18 months – our three counties all need groundbreaking agriculture to support farms and food into the future, not a trade that fuels oppression and warfare. Is this event – against their charitable



aims – really worth such a lot of local opposition?"

Instead of addressing the campaigners' concerns and changing their mind about this dreadful show, the Showground instead took out an injunction against concerned local people expressing their views. CAAT had argued strongly against this injunction in the High Court, saying that people had every right to protest an arms fair in their area.

Campaigners took their message into Malvern town centre, finding a

warm reception from local people doing their weekly shopping – none of whom wanted an arms fair at their Showground. Many of them joined the hundreds of people who sent the Showground a "Farming Not Arming" postcard. Arms dealers arriving at the fair were met by protestors from Malvern Individuals for Peace who made it very clear they should be using their skills for peaceful purposes.

The campaign continues to blossom! To get involved, email [threecounties@gmail.com](mailto:threecounties@gmail.com)

## Dining with death

Arms dealers arriving for a swanky £240 a head banquet in Park Lane in January were greeted by a boisterous demonstration from Stop the Arms Fair campaigners.

Before they could get in to start swilling champagne and award each other prizes at the Aerospace, Defence & Security dinner, arms traders faced a gauntlet of protesters who were there in solidarity with the people of Yemen and with all those suffering in conflicts around the world.

Stop the Arms Fair said, "UK arms sales fuel death,

destruction and violence across the globe. We will not let those profiting from and enabling war to celebrate their deals unchallenged."

Stop the Arms Fair is busy making plans to resist the DSEI 2023 arms fair, scheduled to return to the ExCel Centre in London's Docklands in September. If you would like to get involved in this campaign, contact [info@stopthearmsfair.org.uk](mailto:info@stopthearmsfair.org.uk)



# RIGHT TO BOYCOTT

In the months ahead the UK government is expected to bring forward plans for an “anti-boycott bill” that, if passed, could dramatically affect the ability of organisations like CAAT to campaign for social and climate justice in the UK and around the world.

The proposal would ban public bodies in England from making principled boycotts. The plan was initially announced in 2019 by the then Minister for the Cabinet Office, Oliver Dowden who said that local authorities should “not try to set foreign policy by making rules on which countries they will and won’t do business with.”

The Government has indicated that one of the main intentions behind any legislation will be to ensure that public bodies follow UK foreign policy in their purchasing, procurement, and investment decisions, particularly relating to Israel and Palestine.

The right to boycott is an important part of our democracy. Probably the most famous case of a public body boycott movement spreading across the UK was the movement to boycott apartheid South Africa.

Throughout the 1960s/70s over 100 local authorities decided to ban South African goods from their offices and schools. Some estimates suggest that two thirds of the population lived in local authorities that supported the anti-Apartheid movement.

*Probably the most famous case of a public body boycott movement spreading across the UK was the movement to boycott apartheid South Africa*

In 1981 Strathclyde went one step further, announcing an end to pension fund investments from companies with South African subsidiaries and banning South African sports teams from its playing fields. It was soon joined by Cambridge, Newcastle and Glasgow and most inner London boroughs.

Are the Tories really saying that this movement was wrong?

At present the rhetoric may be limited to baseless scaremongering about the impact of Israeli boycotts and disinvestment in arms companies, but in the long run these proposals could affect almost all campaign groups.

If we are to accept the premise that Whitehall can ban councils from investment in one sector then how long will it be before similar attacks are made on environmental groups calling for disinvestment from fossil fuels? What about health charities that call for an end to investment in tobacco? If the principle is accepted then it will reduce the abilities for local people

and campaign groups to create change on their own doorstep.

Unfortunately these anti-democratic steps are not confined to the UK. At least 35 states in the US have passed similar laws, as has Germany, and similar legislation has been proposed in several other European countries.

That is why CAAT has joined dozens of other organisations in supporting the Right to Boycott campaign and calling for the UK government to immediately halt this bill, on opposition parties to oppose it, and on civil society to mobilise in support of the right to boycott in the cause of justice.

**Find out more about the campaign at [RightToBoycott.org.uk](https://RightToBoycott.org.uk).**



Source: Library of Congress (Source)

# Annual report

In January CAAT published an annual report on UK arms exports in 2021, analysing all the different sources of data to present an overall picture of recent trends in the UK arms trade. The report highlights the lack of transparency from the Government on the subject. This will be the first in a series of such annual reports, with the report on UK arms exports in 2022 to be published later this year.



## INTRODUCING

### Emily Apple

Emily is CAAT's new media coordinator! She joins us from our friends at Netpol, where she is finishing a parental leave cover as communications coordinator. Emily has been a long-term friend and supporter of CAAT and has notched up years of activism and protests against the arms industry.

Emily has also worked as a journalist, with a particular interest in policing and surveillance, the right to protest and social justice movements.

### Charles Wright

Charles has joined CAAT as our new Supporter Development Manager! He has worked at a wide variety of charities, and is a trustee of three. His experience is in supporter development, membership management and all aspects of income generation.

While he has been involved with campaigning organisations since his schooldays, this is his first foray into "our world," and he is immersing himself in as much reading he can get his hands on! He's looking forward to meeting our supporters, so please do get in touch.

## THEY SAID IT

**"Why everyone in [the] arms industry loves a good war"**

Headline in Times of India, 05/11/2022

**"Contracts matter. Money... matters. Once [defence companies] see that we're going to put money [into orders]... they'll get it, that's their job."**

The Pentagon's chief weapon buyer, William LaPlante, quoted in FT

**"A woke military is a weak military. Unfortunately, woke and weak are exactly what our military is becoming under Biden's leadership."**

Former Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, Fox News



Photo: Gage Skidmore | Source: flickr

# DONATE TODAY!

You can donate to CAAT by either visiting our website at [caat.org.uk](http://caat.org.uk), or completing the form below (in block capitals) and returning it to: Freepost RUEA-ERLT-XLZC, CAAT, 7 Wellesley Rd, Tharston, Norwich NR15 2PD

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.

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

### 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)