

CAAT NEWS

The quarterly magazine for Campaign Against Arms Trade

Issue 266
Summer 2023



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Solidarity with Yemen

PLUS

Annual arms sales stats **P7**

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**CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
ARMS
TRADE**

We were very disappointed by the High Court ruling on our Judicial Review against UK arms sales to Saudi Arabia. You can find a summary of the verdict and the urgency of the campaign on page 3.

There isn't any time to pause though, with the arms dealers rolling back into town this September for the DSEI arms fair in London, we will be there to challenge them. Find out more on pages 8–9.

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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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JUDGES DEFER TO GOVERNMENT OVER ARMS TO SAUDI

The judges from the Divisional Court hearing for CAAT’s second Judicial Review against UK arms export licences to Saudi Arabia handed down their verdict on 6th June, and it was not the one we were hoping for.

The judges rejected all four of CAAT’s grounds for challenge, ruling that the Government had not acted irrationally in concluding there was no “clear risk” that UK arms might be used to commit serious violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in Yemen. This in spite of the detailed, documented record of widespread civilian death and harm from the Saudi-led bombing campaign.

The court’s role, as the judges made clear, is not to decide if the Government’s judgements are correct, merely if it was rationally possible to make those judgements based on the law and the facts. This is a high bar, and surpassing it was always going to be a challenge.

Nonetheless, there are many troubling aspects of the judge’s ruling. They accepted that the Government could treat incidents that had not been investigated by the Saudi Coalition’s Joint Incident Assessment Team (JIAT), as not having enough information to decide if they were even “possible” violations of IHL, even when UN expert panels and/or NGOs had provided detailed on-the-ground evidence.

The Government claimed, and the judges accepted, that pursuing such incidents further with the Saudis could offend them, and expend valuable diplomatic capital. Thus, the Saudis’ own failure to investigate, along with their thin skin in the face of criticism, was effectively treated as evidence in favour of arms sales, while diplomatic relations were placed above human life.

We believe this case demonstrates the inadequacy of current export control laws that can allow arms sales that are used to kill civilians in large numbers

The judges also accepted the Government’s invocation of the sacred formula of “national security” to explain why they could not pursue further investigation, citing the appalling Supreme Court ruling over the stripping of Shamima Begum’s citizenship, which stated that Government claims of national security concerns can almost never be overruled by the courts.

After consulting with our lawyers, CAAT is not pursuing an appeal. Nethertheless, we will

continue our campaign against these outrageous sales. We believe this case demonstrates the inadequacy of current export control laws, allowing the sale of arms that are used to kill civilians in large numbers, and giving the Government excessive leeway to explain such death and destruction away as “isolated incidents”.

Meanwhile in Yemen, an uneasy partial truce largely continues, in particular with no Saudi air strikes since April 2022. However, the Saudi partial blockade of Houthi-held ports continues to cause suffering, while all parties to the conflict commit serious human rights abuses, the Houthis in particular engaging in gross repression and human rights abuses in the areas they control.

Negotiations towards a full peace deal between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis continue, but there are fears that any such peace will not be truly inclusive, excluding the voices of women and civil society. Meanwhile there are no prospects of any parties to the conflict facing accountability for the crimes they have committed over the past nearly nine years.

ARMS TRADE SHORTS

Russia

Russian arms exports have fallen by 70% since 2011. The fall was underway long before the invasion of Ukraine, due to a longer-term fall in sales to their biggest markets, but the war has reduced them further.

Foreign Policy, 03/05/2023

An investigation by Nikkei has found evidence of Russian forces buying back weapons that were originally sold to Myanmar and India. It is believed that the weapons, which are said to include components for tanks and missiles, are being used in the war in Ukraine.

Nikkei, 05/06/2023



Photo: EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid | Source: flickr

China



Photo: Russian Ministry of Defence
Source: Wikimedia

The value of Chinese arms exports has fallen by around a quarter in the last 10 years according to an analysis by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Their data shows that arms exports from 2018–2022 dropped by 23% compared to 2013–2017. Some analysts believe this could be a result of military stockpiling by China.

Business Standard, 14/04/2023

China is reported to be in negotiations on weapons sales to Saudi Arabia and Egypt. These are said to focus on the sale of reconnaissance drones and air defence systems.

South China Morning Post, 24/05/2023

India

Germany will provide six new submarines for the Indian Navy. This will be the biggest arms sale to date between the two countries. The deal

is part of a broader pattern of India buying arms from Europe rather than Russia, which had been its largest supplier.

RFI, 11/06/2023



Photo: Marco Kuntzsch | Source: Wikimedia

Israel



Photo: Boevaya Mashina | Source: Wikimedia

Almost a quarter of the value of Israeli arms exports in 2022 went to Arab states, the highest proportion to date. This follows the normalisation of Israel's relations with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco.

Al-Monitor, 14/06/2023

US arms sales

Photo: Andrew Van Huss | Source: Wikimedia



The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has blocked \$735 million worth of US arms exports to Hungary due to its government's refusal to support Sweden joining NATO. The sale was thought to relate to rocket launcher batteries and rockets.
Reuters, 14/06/2023

Analysis from the Intercept has found that the US is selling arms to the majority of the world's autocratic regimes. They found that 57% of autocrats bought US-made arms in 2022 alone.
The Intercept, 11/05/2023

UK arms sales

The value of arms exports from the UK doubled to a record £8.5 billion during 2022. These figures are based on UK government data but do not include the value of Open Licences, which allow an unlimited transfer of weapons in a pre-defined time period.
The Guardian, 21/05/2023

Taiwan

The US government has approved \$440 million worth of potential arms sales to Taiwan. The deal, which has been condemned by China, includes ammunition and vehicle components.
CNN, 30/06/2023

World nuclear forces – January 2023

The nine nuclear-armed states are in the process of renewing their nuclear arsenals. Several of them deployed new nuclear-armed or nuclear-capable weapon systems in 2022. New data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute show the scale of nuclear proliferation. CAAT will always stand against the moral abomination of nuclear weapons.

Country	Deployed warheads		Stored warheads		Total stockpile		Total inventory	
	2023	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
United States	1,770	1,938	3,708	3,708	5,428	5,244		
Russia	1,674	2,815	4,477	4,489	5,977	5,889		
United Kingdom	120	105	225	225	225	225		
France	280	10	290	290	290	290		
China	–	410	350	410	350	410		
India	–	164	160	164	160	164		
Pakistan	–	170	165	170	165	170		
North Korea	–	30	25	30	25	30		
Israel	–	90	90	90	90	90		
Total	3,844	5,732	9,490	9,576	12,710	12,512		

Notes: All estimates are approximate. SIPRI revises its world nuclear forces data each year based on new information and updates to earlier assessments. **Source:** SIPRI Yearbook 2023.

CAMPAIGNERS CHASE ARMS FAIR AWAY FROM MALVERN SHOWGROUND

Campaigners at Three Counties CAAT are celebrating the departure of the Three Counties Defence and Security Expo (3CDSE) from the Showground in Malvern, Worcestershire.

The arms fair has been taking place in Malvern every year for the last five years (with a break for covid), but has encountered growing local resistance every time.

Campaigners across a network of different groups including Three Counties CAAT, Malvern Individuals for Peace, Stop the War in Birmingham, Stroud Red Band, Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Pax Christi, Peace Pledge Union and

others came together for a series of boisterous demonstrations. They were supported by local environmental campaigners from Extinction Rebellion, who blockaded the site in 2021.

In the end, the arms fair had enough. Having now rebranded as SDSC-UK, the next event will take place in Telford in November 2023

The arms fair tried to block protests with an injunction in 2022, which CAAT supporters, Extinction Rebellion and Pax Christi, among others, spoke against in Birmingham Crown Court, and the protests continued.

In the end, the arms fair had enough. Now rebranded as SDSC-UK, the next event will take place in Telford in November 2023

Activists are calling for the Showground in Malvern to be used for peaceful purposes. As Rebecca Tully of Three Counties CAAT said, “We look forward to enjoying events that take us into a better future at this beautiful venue! How about an ethical events policy that guarantees future events support agriculture, horticulture and our community, as well as the future of the planet?”

Three Counties CAAT are keen to work with campaigners in Telford and Birmingham to help them say no to this arms fair. Contact threecountiescaat@gmail.com if you would like to get involved.



CAAT IN FARNBOROUGH

Police officers, spies and the agents of repressive regimes attending the Security and Policing 2023 arms fair in Farnborough received all the information they needed on arrival: a copy of CAAT News, with a feature on militarised policing!

The event is a hub for promoting technology and weapons used to harass migrants, both at militarised borders placed between war zones and safety, and in the

UK, as part of the “Hostile Environment.” Greater Rushmoor Action for Peace was outside saying, “Refugees Welcome Here.”

Invites to the event went out to a wide range of repressive regimes: delegations from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar and Turkey among others attended the event.

The impact of the sale of these technologies was highlighted shortly after by a new film from London CAAT and film-makers Rainbow Collective.

The short film, “Arms Sales

to Dictators, Displacement and Militarised Borders” launched in April and focuses on the conflict in Syria, and the dreadful impact of militarised borders on refugees attempting to flee to Turkey and beyond. The launch event featured a panel discussion with speakers from Peace in Kurdistan and Kurdish Solidarity Network.

You can watch the film and the highly educational panel discussion at: caat.org.uk/news/syria-film

UK ARMS SALES

In May, the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) published its latest data on export licences for military and dual-use goods. This covered the last quarter of 2022, and with it, full-year data for 2022.

CAAT has analysed all of the data available, and made it available and far more accessible than in the Government publications. You can find it all on CAAT's interactive online browser at [CAAT.org.uk](https://caat.org.uk).

After two years of declining sales, the total value of Single Individual Export Licences (SIELs) issued for military goods more than doubled to £8.5 billion in 2022. This is the highest level of sales ever recorded since the UK started publishing such statistics in the early 2000s. Of this total, 54% was for exports to countries rated “Not Free” by Freedom House, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

The largest destination for SIELs by value was Qatar, with a value of £2.7 billion. This mostly related to Typhoon combat aircraft (£2.4 billion), the first three of which were delivered in August 2022.

The second was Saudi Arabia with £1.1 billion worth of licences, most of which were in the category ML4 (bombs, missiles, and countermeasures). These accounted for £964 million of that total and included a licence worth £698 million for “components for bombs,” and another for £240 million for “air-to-surface missiles”. These are likely to represent weapons for Saudi Arabia's UK-supplied Typhoon and Tornado combat aircraft, frequently used in the Saudi bombing campaign in Yemen. While an uneasy truce currently holds in Yemen, without a peace deal the danger of a return to full-scale conflict remains.

After the two Gulf states came the USA (£860 million), Turkey (£424 million), and Ukraine (£401 million). The bulk of the value of licences for Ukraine



Photo: James Stringer | Source: Flickr

These figures show that the UK arms industry is working overtime to arm some of the world's most authoritarian regimes, as well as countries engaged in armed conflict, with the UK government's full approval.

were in the ML5 category (radars, sensors, targeting systems etc.) at £113 million, ML13 (body armour, helmets, etc.) – £86m, ML11 (“other electronic equipment”) – £85m, and ML6 (armoured vehicles and components) – £61m.

However, most UK arms supplies to Ukraine in 2022 were donated by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) from the UK military's own stocks. Such MoD donations do not require an export licence, although they are evaluated according to the same criteria as for export licences.

SIELs are the most common type of export licence, and the only one for which a value is reported. CAAT estimates that slightly over half

of UK arms exports are actually conducted using “open” licences, which allow for unlimited exports of the equipment covered by the licence to specified countries. CAAT has long argued that this represents a major gap in transparency in UK arms exports.

These figures show that the UK arms industry is working overtime to arm some of the world's most authoritarian regimes, as well as countries engaged in armed conflict, with the UK government's full approval. Despite its repeated claims to operate a “rigorous and robust” system of export controls, their record shows a complete lack of concern for human rights or the harm caused by UK arms to civilians in conflict zones, with the interests of the arms industry almost always coming first.

These trends, along with other data, case studies, and policy developments, will be discussed in more detail in CAAT's forthcoming Annual Report on UK arms exports in 2022.



ERDOĞAN'S VICTORY MEANS WE URGENTLY NEED TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST ARMS SALES TO TURKEY

CAAT's media coordinator, Emily Apple was in Turkey for the 2023 election. Here are her reflections from the visit.

I was recently in Bakur, the majority Kurdish region of Turkey for two weeks during the first round of the recent elections. During this period, I spent time with the Yeşil Sol Parti (the Green Left Party), and observed the elections in Hakkâri.

It's clear from the people I spoke to, from what I observed personally on the ground, and from previous delegations I've been on that this was not a free and fair election. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's victory is devastating for the Kurdish population in the region. Numerous people we spoke to described the election as a matter of "life or death" for them. Many are now expecting to face arrest and imprisonment for their role in the election campaign. Now, more than ever, Kurdish communities need all of us to make sure they are not forgotten, and that we ensure that our Government's role in arming Erdoğan is exposed and challenged.

The election campaign was full of hope. Despite the oppression – just as one example, in the run up to the elections, at least 126

people were arrested, including politicians, journalists, and lawyers – the campaign was joyful. People in Bakur really felt that it was their chance to rid of Erdoğan.

Not only does Erdoğan control much of the media, Turkey is also one of the world's biggest jailers of journalists, ensuring there was no balanced coverage during the campaign

But the odds were always stacked against the opposition. Turkey may be a democracy on paper, but many would say that Erdoğan is nothing more than a fascist dictator. He not only controls much of the media, but Turkey is one of the world's biggest jailers of journalists, ensuring there was no balanced coverage of political viewpoints during the campaign.

Every rally we went to with the YSP was heavily policed. During one women's march, riot police blocked our passage along the pavement. Women were not allowed to march with placards or shout political slogans.

On election day, we witnessed fraud and intimidation. This included military personnel bussed into a village to vote, a police officer with a gun in the voting room when this is prohibited, military vehicles stationed outside polling stations, and a heavy police presence at most polling stations we visited. Since the election, the UK delegation has seen evidence of votes being changed in the official register.

Erdoğan's victory means this repression will only increase. And the UK government is complicit in this oppression. UK arms companies have helped Turkey develop drones, and BAE Systems is helping Turkey develop its own fighter aircraft.

This will have devastating consequences for Kurdish people not only in Turkey, but also in Northern Syria and Iraq where the Turkish state is conducting bombing operations. The UK government should immediately suspend any further arms deals with Turkey and put the lives and human rights of the Kurdish people above the profits of arms dealers.

Stop arming Turkey

The result of the election is a blow for human rights campaigners and democrats across Turkey. It cements Erdoğan's position, and will allow him to deepen his repression and near-dictatorial rule.

Turkey is a member of NATO, and a significant buyer of UK arms. In 2022, the UK issued single arms export licences worth £452 million, making Turkey the fourth largest recipient of such licences. Over the period 2018-2022, the value of single licences was £942 million, the seventh largest.

This does not count the value of so-called "open" licences, which allow an unlimited number of exports, including one Open General licence specifically for Turkey's TF-X project to develop a domestically-produced combat aircraft, on which BAE Systems are collaborating, providing technology and components.

As Emily wrote in the previous article, Turkey has been engaged for decades in a civil war against Kurdish groups in the south-east of the country, who rebelled in the 1980s against the long-standing repression of Kurdish culture, language, and identity. The state has pursued a brutal

campaign of military repression, frequently targeting civilians, and committing severe human rights abuses.

This war has spilled over to neighbouring Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, Turkey has targeted rebel PKK fighters based in Iraqi Kurdistan, frequently killing civilians. In Syria, they have launched multiple invasions since 2016 into areas controlled by the Kurdish-led Syrian Defence Forces (SDF), which they accuse of being linked to the PKK.

The SDF are the armed forces of the autonomous Rojava region, where local groups of different ethnicities have sought to establish participatory, democratic institutions, fighting both the Turkish armed forces and ISIS terrorists. A Turkish invasion of Syria in 2019 briefly led to the UK suspending export licences to Turkey, but these resumed a few months later under some restrictions, which were completely removed at the end of 2021.

Recently, there has been talk of

a potential major UK arms deal with Turkey. This would involve combat aircraft, transport aircraft, and warships. This is in response to reluctance on the part of the US Congress to sell them F-16 fighters, due to the country's repressive policies, their repeated violations of Greece's airspace, and Erdoğan's continuing refusal to allow Sweden to join NATO. The UK appears unconcerned by any such considerations.

Turkey also plays a major role in European efforts to prevent refugees from finding safety in Europe, with an EU-Turkey deal paying the latter to stop refugee land and sea crossings, forcing them into far more dangerous routes, as exemplified by the horrific sinking of a fishing boat carrying hundreds of refugees near Greece. The UK is also very much involved in this effort, recently providing Turkish border forces with £3 million of funding, as well as training and equipment, to support their repression of refugees.



Photo: Number 10 | Source: flickr

STOP THE DSEI ARMS FAIR

DSEI 2023 Defence Security Equipment International, one of the world's worst arms fairs, returns in September (12–15th). Resistance is planned!

Photo: Diana More | Source: flickr



Photo: Ian Haskins | Source: flickr



Photo: Global Justice Now | Source: flickr

The biennial event at the Excel Centre, is a gathering of some 30,000 attendees. These include scores of arms dealers from all the most despicable companies including Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems, Raytheon, and Northrop Grumman.

They will be joined by invited military delegations from all sorts of human-rights-abusing regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Qatar who will be escorted around the show by UK military officials.

It's a Government affair, with much of the international legwork being done by civil servants that work for the UK arms export promotion unit. This is only possible due to the public funding that goes towards boosting arms sales and fuelling arms deals.

High level politicians will attend too, with lots of speeches

and private talks taking place. Past events have seen prime ministers, foreign secretaries and others in attendance. In 2021 Ben Wallace the Defence Secretary was sighted in a meeting with the Saudi delegation. The UK has made billions of pounds worth of weapons sales to the Saudi regime despite hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths in Yemen.

The arms fair takes place in London's Excel Centre, on Royal Victoria Dock. In the run-up to the fair, warships will fill the dock, arriving helicopters will darken the skies, and roads will be clogged with trucks carrying armoured vehicles, howitzers, and drones.

Activists from multiple groups including CAAT supporters will be coming together as part of Stop the Arms Fair. Their first goal will be to obstruct as much of the set up as they can. Starting from

September 4, they will be in the area, doing all they can to make sure war and destruction does not reach the ExCel centre.

From September 11, a series of creative and disruptive protests are planned, aimed at telling the gathering arms dealers that they are not welcome in East London. There will be different themed days planned across the two weeks, which will include Borders; Climate; Palestine and a Festival of Resistance.

The DSEI arms fair is the manifestation of everything that CAAT opposes. It presents a rare opportunity where the world's worst arms dealers gather to sell weapons to the world's most despicable regimes with the active support of the UK government.

War starts here, that's why we need to stop it here!

PUBLIC ORDER BILL

The Public Order Act 2023 has now become a reality. Not only have the most draconian anti-protest powers we've seen in generations become law, the UK government has bypassed democracy to introduce a new category of disruption that is "more than minor".

New protest powers will potentially impact all of us who want to take action against the arms trade, especially with protests such as the upcoming actions against DSEI. But it's important to remember that protest is still legal and we still have the right to take the streets to voice our dissent.

While there are many worrying elements to the Act, including a new suspicionless stop and search power for protest-related items and Serious Disruption Prevention Orders, these have not come into force yet.

However, new powers available to the police include a new offence of locking on that's punishable by up to six months in jail, an offence of going equipped to lock on, punishable for a fine, and a very ambiguous offence of interference with key infrastructure that carries a maximum penalty of 12 months imprisonment. For full details of the new Act,

Netpol and Liberty have both produced briefings that are worth checking out.

Just as important as what the new powers are, is what we're going to do about them, and how we can keep ourselves and each other safe.

Netpol is advocating several measures to protect all of us as part of its Defend Dissent campaign:

1 Resist surveillance. New protest measures will lead to more surveillance, so we need to take surveillance seriously and ensure we take, at minimum, basic security precautions. This ranges from not live-streaming protests, to using encrypted messaging

Just as important as what the new powers are, is what we're going to do about them, and how we can keep ourselves and each other safe.

apps such as Signal, to not talking to the police. In particular people need to be aware of the blue-bib Police Liaison Officers, who appear to be friendly. However they are intelligence gatherers and information they collate will be used against campaigners. Not engaging with them not only keeps you safe, it keeps others safe, especially those from marginalised communities who are more likely to face repression.

2 Know your rights. Anyone who has been to a protest knows that knowing your rights doesn't protect you from the police abusing those rights. But knowing your rights does give you power, and does help you to plan and to protect each other. Green and Black Cross run regular KYR training online – look out for the next one and get informed.

3 Monitor the police. One of the best ways to challenge repressive policing is to have a good picture of exactly what is taking place on our streets. Let them know what you've experienced or witnessed and help all of us hold the police to account.

4 Collective solidarity. Our power to oppose repressive policing and campaign for the issues we care about comes from collective solidarity. This means not allowing the state to divide us into good and bad protesters and making sure that those who are targeted by repressive policing know they're supported.

This Government has introduced these new laws because they're scared of our power. This Government wants us to be too scared to take to the streets. But we all need to show that we won't be deterred from using the power of protest as a force for change.

Photo: Alisdare Hickson | Source: flickr



CAAT AT THE STUC

CAAT joined the hundreds of trade unionists from across Scotland who gathered in Dundee for the annual Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) conference, discussing and debating everything from solidarity with Palestinians to increasing protections for journalists and ending the war in Ukraine.

We spoke with lots of people, from rank-and-file members to union and political party leaders. The focus was our vision of socially useful production, with genuine job security, as an alternative to arms production for the highly skilled workers employed by the Scottish arms industry.

Our research has uncovered millions of pounds being handed over by the Scottish government to arms companies while workers are struggling through the cost-of-living crisis

Over the three days of the conference, community and industrial branches took forward our example motions. We expect to continue the discussions on the vital role trade unions can play to push forward the campaign for a functional Scottish Defence Diversification agency. This is especially important when considering how our research uncovered millions of pounds being handed over by the Scottish government to arms companies while workers are struggling through the cost-of-living crisis. The time for action is now.

Thousands of workers are employed by arms industry giants like BAE Systems and Raytheon across the country. In Glenrothes Raytheon is the second largest employer after the local council – so we posed the question: if this private company that relies on conflict and repression to keep its profit margins plump was to decide to withdraw from Fife – what would happen to all those workers?

Unfortunately there has been



CAAT's Scotland Coordinator with Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar

very little movement from the Scottish government or trade unions to protect those jobs by retraining the workers with the skills to transition to other sectors.

Even the trade unionists representing those within the military manufacturing sector agreed that there had been a failure to safeguard these jobs and shared concerns about the pressure from manufacturing automation and the lack of commercial opportunities. Across the board, everyone agrees that we cannot continue with business as usual and leave workers as an afterthought.

Scotland's First Minister, Humza Yousaf, and Scottish Labour leader, Anas Sarwar, dropped by our stall and were supportive of our call for solidarity with people in Yemen and an end to the war.

CAAT's volunteers discussed

With the ever-flowing pipeline of Government public subsidies, there is no real incentive to explore how workers can use their skills to support the green, healthcare or digital industries that desperately need the expertise currently vacuumed by the arms industry.

how the military-industrial complex is a barrier to a real and just transition. With the ever-flowing pipeline of Government public subsidies, there is no real incentive to explore how workers can use their skills to support the green, healthcare or digital industries that desperately need the expertise currently vacuumed up by the arms industry.

To find out more about our work with trade unions in Scotland or to receive copies of our materials for trades councils, please contact scotland@caat.org.uk

STOP SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR ARMS COMPANIES

Challenging and ending Government subsidies for the arms industry has always been a key component of CAAT's work, with our recent research exposing over £8 million in public grants from the Scottish government to multi-billion pound arms companies since 2021.

The Scottish government claims to uphold and champion human rights around the world, often in contrast to an unprincipled Westminster government that has an appalling record.

Yet, despite these lofty claims, thousands of people across the country are struggling to make ends meet, and crucial public services are having their budgets slashed. In contrast, the public purse always appears to be wide open for arms companies Leonardo, Thales and Raytheon, which always seem able to rely on funding via Scottish government grants.

Sustained public pressure over the questionable ethics behind these money streams has forced the Scottish government's funding

body, Scottish Enterprise, to implement so-called "Human Rights Due Diligence" forms. CAAT has reviewed these applications and they are not fit for purpose.

The public purse always appears to be wide open for arms companies Leonardo, Thales and Raytheon, which always seem able to rely on funding via Scottish government grants

Each of the six arms companies that have received millions could easily neglect to disclose their involvement in exporting arms and military equipment to human rights abusers. Some of these companies have even armed the Saudi-led bombardment of Yemen, which has created the worst

humanitarian crisis in the world.

We have launched an action calling on Richard Lockhead, the new Minister for Small Business, Trade and Innovation, to collaborate with CAAT on extensively reviewing the policies and priorities of Scottish Enterprise and its partner bodies. The aim should be to implement a new, functional Human Rights Due Diligence checklist ensuring public funding is only awarded in alignment with the values of the Scottish government and its people.

Make your voice heard. Join the call for greater accountability, responsible use of public funds, and an end to Government support for arms dealers, by signing and sharing the petition at caat.org.uk/endfundingforwar



Photo: Manuel Farnbacher | Source: flickr

DEFENCE REVIEW

The long-trailed “refresh” of the UK’s Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy (referred to as the Refresh for the rest of this article) was published on 13 March 2023. This followed the publication of the original strategy in March 2021.

The optimism of Boris Johnson’s “Global Britain” from the original Integrated Review (IR), is replaced by a more sombre and serious tone in the face of war in Europe and a tumultuous merry-go-round of Prime Ministers. NATO is central in the refresh with the EU receiving only a couple of mentions.

There is a new framing of an “Atlantic-Pacific” partnership. The paper avoids framing China as a threat and rather describes it as a “systemic challenger,” but still takes a harder stance than most European states. The Indo-Pacific Tilt of the original Integrated Review is treated as having been delivered, with the Refresh moving its emphasis back on to Europe and Russia.

Unfortunately, topics of key concern such as the Middle East, conflict prevention and human rights are still just as deprioritised as they were in the Integrated Review. Something notable from the original review is that arms exports were not mentioned at all, rather they were dealt with separately in the Business and Industrial Strategy.

The Refresh does at least mention arms controls, but the question remains: in what spirit? CAAT was critical of the Integrated Review’s failure to address arms controls, despite the matter having been just as relevant at the time of publication. In the foreword the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, writes “We will also support efforts to renew arms control and counter-proliferation, as it is when tensions are highest that leadership to establish clear routes for de-escalation is most vital.”

The Refresh states, “As part of IR2023 we will introduce a new



Photo: Number10 | Source: flickr

long-term goal to manage the risks of miscalculation and escalation between major powers, upholding strategic stability through strategic-level dialogue and an updated approach to arms control and counter-proliferation.”

It is not possible to understand what is happening in Ukraine without considering Russian exports to the Assad regime throughout the war in Syria. This is how “major powers” fund their domestic industries through selling to other conflicts

While this is an improvement in rhetoric, it’s important to look at what lies behind this statement. It places an “escalation between major powers” at the centre of arms controls, and de-prioritises other conflicts particularly ones to which the UK is exporting arms.

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For this aspect of the Refresh to come to fruition, the UK needs to follow the same rules as everyone else. Civilians in Palestine, Yemen and Turkey are paying the price for UK exceptionalism.

With a general election coming up in 2024, and Labour focusing on issues around cost of living rather than opening up debate on foreign policy, it’s an important time for the public to be reflecting on how we want to see the UK’s influence being used around the world, and what we want to see from a foreign policy that is being done in our name.

Get involved

Our events and training sessions are the keys to activating our supporters and campaigners.

Whether it's finding courage through direct action, sharpening those research skills to challenge arms companies near you, joining us at one of our reading groups as we continuously build our knowledge on the arms trade and its intersecting issues, building your confidence in campaigning online, or, of course, taking to the streets to oppose arms fairs of all sizes, our exciting regular programme of events has something for you.

Visit caat.org.uk/events to see what is happening near you!

Join the CAAT Speakers Network

Raise awareness about CAAT and get people campaigning by going to see them!

Whether you are an experienced public speaker, or have never spoken in public before, we will provide full training and information to help you to do so!

Contact outreach@caat.org.uk for more information.

CAAT at Glastonbury

CAAT attended Glastonbury this year where we had an exhibition space. We used our "shop front" to highlight the horrific impact of UK arms sales around the world.



THEY SAID IT

"We actually got more interest after sanctions. If someone wants to sanction you, it means we are strong"

Arms industry rep from Belarus reflecting on the impact of sanctions. Los Angeles Times, March 02 2023

"We get it: defence companies won't be everyone's cup of tea"

Piece on arms industry shares in 2023, Forbes, May 19 2023

"The war in Europe [has] ushered in a new era for Rheinmetall"

Rheinmetall Chief Executive, Armin Papperger, reflects on the Ukraine invasion's impact on his company's profits. Financial Times, March 16 2023



Photo: Rheinmetall Defence | Source: Wikimedia

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 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).

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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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