

CAAT NEWS

The quarterly magazine for Campaign Against Arms Trade

Issue 276
Spring 2026



HOW POLICE SPIED ON ANTI-ARMS CAMPAIGNERS

PLUS

Coup in Venezuela P6

Spycops P8-9

UK arms and Sudan P10



CAMPAIGN
AGAINST
ARMS
TRADE

2026 has already been a big year for the war industry, with the US carrying out a coup in Venezuela and the further escalation of war around the world.

A lot of those wars are fuelled with arms company profiteering and governments like the one in the UK that enable it. In this issue we'll be exploring how that relationship works and who benefits from it.

Thanks again for all of your support and for ensuring CAAT can be a voice for peace and against the arms trade.

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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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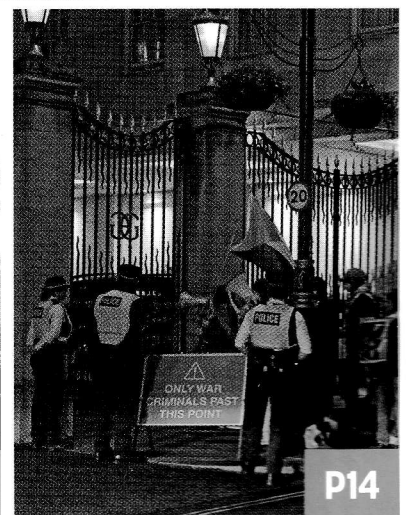
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Photo: United Nations Photo | Source: Flickr



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GAZA: A "CEASEFIRE" IN NAME ONLY

On October 10th last year, a ceasefire agreement was reached between Israel and Hamas, supposedly the first stage of a process that would finally bring peace to Gaza, after over two years of genocidal war.

However, while all Israeli hostages have been released, and the remains of those killed in Gaza returned, and while Israel has likewise released around 2,000 Palestinian hostages, Israel has continually violated the ceasefire from day one.

At the time of writing, over 600 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks, while Israel has broken its promise to allow unhindered flow of aid, allowing only an average of 120 trucks a day into Gaza, compared to the 600 believed to be the bare minimum.

They have continued to deny most medical supplies, and have blocked all equipment for reconstruction. Israel continues to occupy more than half of the Gaza Strip, with their "Yellow Line" demarcating the occupation zone encroaching steadily further into Gaza.

Israel continues to hold thousands of Palestinian prisoners indefinitely, many without charge or trial, and mostly in horrendous conditions, accompanied by torture and abuse. They have held Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, director of

the Kamal Adwan hospital in Gaza, for well over a year without charge.

In January, US President Trump announced the start of "phase 2" of the ceasefire, but this has seen little change, with if anything the pace of Israeli attacks increasing, although the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza has recently opened for a very limited number of medical evacuees.

In the face of this ongoing, albeit slower-paced, genocide, western countries including the UK government continues to pretend that the ceasefire is real and lasting and that all is well

Meanwhile, the US and Israel are developing sinister plans to herd the Palestinians of Gaza into a number of heavily controlled and surveilled "managed communities" – the latest euphemism for concentration camps – while the seafront, always the lifeline for the Gazan people, is being reserved for luxury developments without Palestinians.

In the face of this ongoing, albeit

slower-paced, genocide, western countries including the UK government continues to pretend that the ceasefire is real and lasting and that all is well.

Business & Trade Secretary Peter Kyle has even suggested that the partial suspension of UK arms export licences to Israel – which never included components for the F-35 combat aircraft, the most crucial element of UK arms supplies to Israel – may be reviewed.

This is despite the fact that the two key reasons why the government admitted in the first place that Israel was breaking international law, leading to the suspension – namely the blocking of aid and the treatment of prisoners – have not changed in any way. 58 MPs and peers wrote to Kyle in response, expressing their extreme concern at this grotesque idea.

The "ceasefire" means that Gaza has fallen off the front pages, but the genocide is ongoing, and our efforts to oppose it and to push western governments to end their complicity must not let up.

ARMS TRADE SHORTS

Germany

The German parliament has approved more than €50 billion in military purchases ranging from missiles to armoured vehicles, satellite systems and new uniforms. **Euractive, 17/12/2025**

The German government is resuming arms sales to Israel. These were temporarily halted due to pressure relating to the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. The German government has supported the assault and is the second largest supplier of arms to Israel behind the US. **BBC News, 17/11/2025**



BAE

Workers at BAE sites across Lancashire are threatening strike action following a breakdown in pay negotiations. Unite members had previously called off a strike but have accused BAE bosses of negotiating in bad faith. **Unite the Union, 2/2/2026**

The UK government has announced an £8 billion fighter jet deal between BAE and Turkey. The deal will cover 20 Typhoon aircraft and associated weapons. **BAE Systems, 27/10/2025**



Cambridge

Dozens of Cambridge academics have urged the university to withdraw investments from the arms industry. They allege that the University has failed to be transparent about the extent of investments and which companies it is investing in. **Middle East Eye, 2/2/2026**



Photo: U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jack Sanders | Source: Wikimedia



Russia

Russia claims to have secured \$15 billion worth of arms sales in 2025, saying it has sold equipment to more than 30 countries. The figures are disputed due to sanctions. **Defense News, 2/2/2026**

The US and Russia have agreed to reestablish high-level military dialogue for the first time in more than four years. It is another sign of warming relations between the two countries since Donald Trump was re-elected in 2024. **Defense News, 05 February 2026**

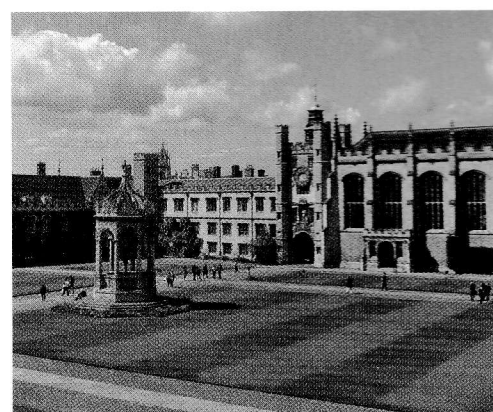


Photo: Unplue | Source: Wikimedia

Saudi Arabia

Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are said to be planning a military pact in response to growing tensions between the US and Iran. This three way deal would be in addition to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia's mutual defence agreement, which was signed last September. **South China Morning Post, 16/1/2026**



Europe

The Council of the European Union has formally adopted the European Defence Industry Programme, an agreement designed to boost EU military research and cooperation. **EU Neighbors East, 9/12/2025**



China

China's foreign ministry has imposed sanctions on US arms companies after Donald Trump approved a large package of arms sales to Taiwan. Chinese government sources have warned that it could impact Donald Trump's planned state visit to China in April. **Financial Times, 6/2/2026**



Pakistan

Pakistani arms exports have reached a record high, with \$10 billion worth of contracts signed in 2025. This is said to include major deals with Libya, which is subject to a UN arms embargo. **The Print.In, 6/1/2026**

India

India and the US have signed an agreement to expand military cooperation over the next 10-years. The agreement, which came as the two countries were negotiating a trade deal, commits to enhance “coordination, information sharing and tech cooperation.”
BBC News, 31/10/2025

India has signed a military and energy agreement with the United Arab Emirates that will see the two countries cooperating on nuclear energy and arms is said to be a step towards a Strategic Defence Partnership.
Middle East Eye, 20/1/2026

Israel

The Israeli government has committed to spending \$110 billion over the next decade to expand its own domestic arms industry, making it less reliant on imports from the US and others.
TRT World, 24/12/2025

UK sales

The UK secured over £20 billion worth of arms exports to allies in 2025, expected to be the highest since records began over 40 years ago. This included the UK’s largest ever warship export agreement and largest fighter jet sale for a generation.
UK Government, 26/12/2025

US

The US government has given the greenlight to \$6 billion worth of arms to Israel and \$9 billion worth to Saudi Arabia. The Saudi sale is reported to include 730 Patriot missiles and related equipment. Sales to Israel include military helicopters and vehicles.
Associated Press, 31/1/2026

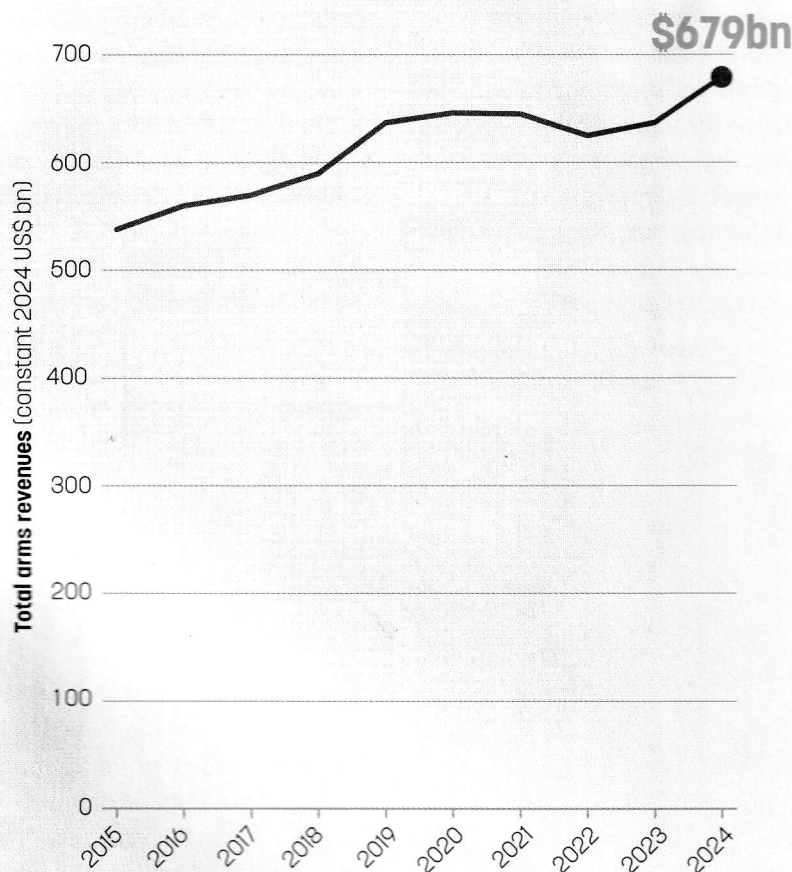
The Pentagon claims to have reverse-engineered Iran’s “kamikaze drones”, which were used against US military bases in 2024, in order to replicate them. The new drones will be part of the first US drone attack unit, which was recently announced and will be stationed at an unspecified location in the Middle East.
Daily Telegraph, 7/12/2025

Arms companies revenues

Research from the Stockholm International Research Institute (SIPRI) shows that the combined arms revenues of the world’s largest

arms-producing and military services companies increased by 5.9 per cent in real terms in 2024, to reach to reach \$679 billion.

This is the highest level ever recorded by SIPRI. The total arms revenues of the Top 100 went up by 26 per cent over the decade 2015–24.



- 1 Lockheed Martin Corp.  \$64,650m
- 2 RTX  \$43,600m
- 3 Northrop Grumman Corp.  \$37,850m
- 4 BAE Systems  \$33,790m
- 5 General Dynamics Corp.  \$33,630m
- 6 Boeing  \$30,550m
- 7 Rostec  \$27,120m
- 8 AVIC  \$20,320m
- 9 CETC  \$18,920m
- 10 L3Harris Technologies  \$16,210m

VENEZUELA AND UK ARMS

On 3 January 2026, the US launched a military assault on Venezuela, kidnapping the President, Nicolas Maduro, and his wife, and killing at least 100 people, including civilians.

The attack was an illegal act of aggression in clear violation of the United Nations Charter. There is simply no legal or moral justification for such a blatant violation of another country's sovereignty.

The attack followed months of US bombings of fishing vessels in the Caribbean, many from Venezuela, which have so far killed 126 people.

The US alleges, without presenting any evidence, that the boats targeted were carrying drugs to the US. Yet, even if true, it would still provide absolutely no moral or legal justification in either US or international law for the killings. In one particularly notorious incident, a US aircraft bombed survivors who were desperately clinging to the wreckage of a boat hit by an earlier strike.

These killings are not even war crimes, as there is no war. The allegation is that they are simply committing murder.

Since the kidnapping of Maduro and his wife, who now face "narco-terrorism" charges in the US, the Venezuelan government has been led by Maduro's deputy. They appear to be cooperating

with US President Trump, who is seeking to take personal control of Venezuela's oil export revenues, to be deposited in an account in Qatar, in what looks like an extremely questionable arrangement.

The F-35 was confirmed as being used in the US attack on Venezuela. Is this the "peace and security" Starmer and co are talking about, that the F-35 is supposedly essential to?

The US is one of the leading recipients of UK arms exports. Between 2014–23, UK arms companies received orders for military equipment and services from the US and Canada worth £14.6 billion, of which the vast majority would have been from the US. The UK and US arms industries are highly interconnected, with companies from each having major subsidiaries across the Atlantic and cooperating extensively.

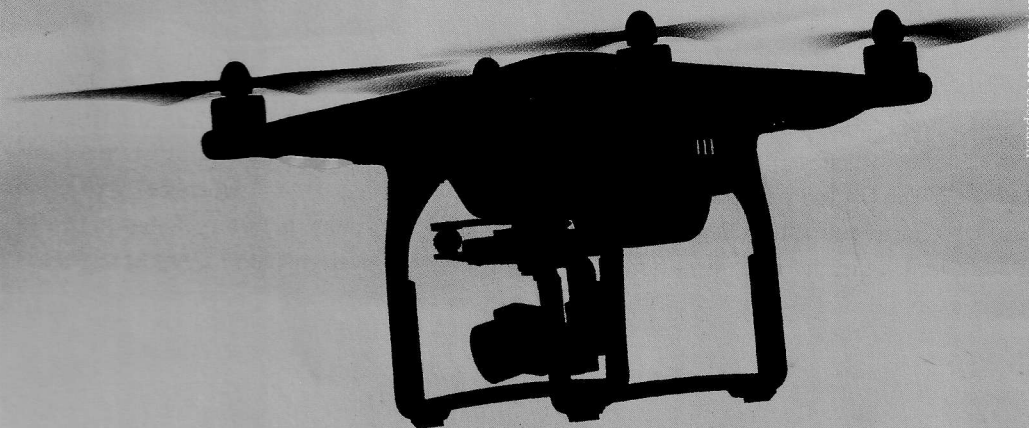
One of the most notable aspects of the US-UK arms trade is the F-35 combat aircraft, which the UK is buying from the US, though 15% of the value of each plane is manufactured in the UK.

The aircraft is mainly built in and used by the US, but jointly produced with and sold to numerous other countries, including Israel. Notoriously, the UK exempted components for the F-35, used extensively by Israel in its genocide in Gaza, from its partial suspension of export licences to Israel in September 2024. The Starmer government claims it cannot impose further restrictions on the F-35 components disrupting the F-35 programme as a whole, as it is crucial to global "peace and security."

The F-35 was confirmed as being used in the US attack on Venezuela. Is this the "peace and security" Starmer and co are talking about?

As the Trump regime becomes increasingly lawless in its actions at home and abroad, brutalising US cities and threatening further violence against Venezuela, Iran, Colombia, Mexico, and Greenland, the UK arms trade with the US makes the UK a subservient partner in US-led global violence. It is surely time to end this unequal and highly destructive military-industrial relationship.

Photo: Superhercules | Source: English Wikipedia



UK DRONE EXPORTS

As most regular readers of CAAT News will know all too well, successive governments' assertions that the UK has one of the most robust arms export systems in the world is offensive nonsense. However, an incredible piece of investigative journalism in Declassified in December 2025 shows exactly how ridiculous that claim is.

The article reveals that despite the Labour government's partial suspension on exports of military equipment to Israel that the latter could use in its genocide in Gaza, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) is using British engines, made by RCV Engines in its drones.

An IAI advertisement for its newest generation of military drones, the Apus 25, inadvertently revealed that it contained an RCV Engine. The drone is equipped for "offensive operations" and will "redefine tactical drone operations for round and maritime forces worldwide".

RCV Engines is doing this by utilising an outrageous loophole that means its engines no longer require export licenses. According to documents obtained through Freedom of Information requests, this is because they have successfully argued that the engines were not specifically designed or modified for military use.

It also appears that Conservative MP Christopher Chope lobbied for the engine exemption. RCV Engines wrote that "on that occasion he [Chope] helped us remove the need for an export licence when shipping worldwide. This significantly improved lead times, reduced the admin burden and enabled the securing of more orders worldwide."

What is clear is that our export licensing system is broken beyond repair. We know that this loophole was used to facilitate Israel's genocide and break international law.

While we know that this included exports to Israel that ran until February 2025, it is unknown which other countries RCV Engines is shipping to without license and what other war crimes or human rights abuses its engines might be facilitating. We also do not know what other companies

might be exploiting this loophole and what other exports might be happening under the radar. Hardly the picture of a robust arms export licensing system!

However what is clear is that our export licensing system is broken beyond repair. We know that this loophole was used to facilitate Israel's genocide and break international law. And we know that there are no limits to what governments or companies are prepared to do to continue arming repressive regimes and boosting their profits no matter the cost.

There are no excuses for this complicity in genocide. International law is not based on whether there is a loophole in domestic law. RCV Engines and this government are utterly morally and legally bankrupt. And it's down to all of us to hold them to account and to ensure that these loopholes cannot be exploited without consequence.



SPYCOPS

CAAT's media coordinator Emily Apple outlines how undercover police officers spied on anti-arms trade campaigners and exaggerated their threat in order to protect the arms industry.

In 2015, I became a core participant in the Undercover Policing Inquiry into the actions of the Special Demonstration Squad (SDS), a covert undercover unit that operated within the Metropolitan Police Service to infiltrate campaign groups.

Officers worked as undercover spycops, targeting campaigners and activists under a false pretence and in some cases having intimate relationships and using the names of dead children to cover their identity.

I knew that I'd been extensively targeted by "Jason Bishop", an undercover cop who had been deployed to spy on an activist group called Disarm DSEI that I was part of between 2001–2005.

Bishop didn't just infiltrate my life, he infiltrated my family. He even gave my son a giant

cuddly polar bear when he was two weeks old. I trusted him. He was my friend.

CAAT applied for core participancy status twice. Once in 2015 when the inquiry said there wasn't enough evidence we were spied on, and again in 2023, when they claimed that reporting on us was due to "collateral intrusion" resulting from my involvement.

The desire of the state to suppress anti-arms protesters led to grossly exaggerated reporting, resulting in repressive policing operations on the ground

However, it's now clear this wasn't the case, with reporting on CAAT pre-dating reporting on me.

This tranche of the inquiry also

overlaps with the time corporate spy Martin Hogbin infiltrated CAAT. Hogbin was such a close friend I asked him to be my son's secular godfather, and I'm asking the inquiry to explore whether his intelligence ended up with the police, and what the relationship was between corporate spies and the undercover policing units.

Our campaigns were targeted not because of our actual actions, but because, as stated in the 2003 review of Bishop's deployment, our protests against DSEI "could influence the financial wellbeing of the state."

Another 2007 report from spycop Robert Hastings claims we were targeted "because of the high profile nature of the event and the amount of money involved and the embarrassment that would be caused to the government".



Photo: David Mizzoni

Meanwhile the worst threat these spycops faced was from “over enthusiastic policing” by their uniformed colleagues.

But it’s worse than that. The desire of the state to suppress anti-arms protesters led to grossly exaggerated reporting, resulting in repressive policing operations on the ground. For example, a 2003 report from Bishop claims that “a regular sit-down in the road could turn into serious violence”. Street party gatherings were described as “serious disorder” while little or no investigation was carried out against the arms companies marketing illegal weapons at the DSEI arms fair.

The deterrence worked. I remember after the DSEI 2003 protests, friends saying they wouldn’t go to any more London demos because of that policing operation.

There’s evidence this harassment

was directly targeted based on the exaggerated intelligence supplied by Bishop and others. I’ve had two mental health breakdowns as a result of policing, and I’m hoping that the inquiry will acknowledge that the spycops deliberately inflicted psychological harm.

The inquiry has seen the publication of an SDS office note from March 2000 that records a plan for uniformed police to “subject [activists] to a fairly overt series of stops/surveillance and general harassment” noting that “uniform will relish the challenge of being let off the leash.” What is this if not a plan to target campaigners?

Anti-arms trade campaigners are currently facing unprecedented levels of repression, in particular with the proscription of Palestine Action.

There are striking similarities between the exaggerated

threats that are outlined in these documents and the phoney justifications that are being relied upon by this government to target protesters today.

There are serious questions that need to be answered about the complicity between successive governments, the police and the arms companies

There are serious questions that need to be answered about the complicity between successive governments, the police and the arms companies to repress our right to protest against a trade that is complicit in multiple genocides and human rights abuses.

For more information about undercover policing and abuses, visit Spycops.co.uk

LOCAL ACTION

No to the NEC arms fair

Campaigners in Birmingham said no to the SDSC-UK arms fair at the city's NEC arena. The event, which focuses on Special Operations Forces, has previously been chased out of Malvern and Telford.



As well as a die-in at Birmingham International station, and a noisy demo outside the arms fair, campaigners from the Red Rebels protest group brought the military event to the attention of otherwise oblivious attendees at the nearby Spring Fair and Ice Cream Fair.

The NEC should not be hosting an industry that creates such mayhem



Leafleters were busy all day, getting a great reception from those arriving at the NEC for the other events.

The untold story of modern warfare is the increasing emphasis placed on destruction carried out using cyber (online) and electromagnetic spectrum (EM) weapons.

Space-based targeting systems, combined with human intelligence, aircraft sensors and signals data, are used to orchestrate these

attacks – alongside “kinetic” strikes from drones, bombs, mortars and missiles. These attacks are woven together using “joint fires” systems of the kind used to such devastating effect by Israeli forces in Gaza.

The recent US attack on Venezuela depended on these systems, which saw the power system, mobile phone system, internet, GPS, and media broadcast capability in the Venezuelan capital, Caracas knocked out.

The NEC should not be hosting an industry that creates such mayhem. The databases, radio systems, targeting systems, electronic and cyber systems on display are all part of the weaponry used by the most lethal of modern war fighters. They have no place in a venue better known for hosting ice cream and toy fairs.

Protesters will keep saying the NEC should be used for peaceful purposes and that there should be no more arms fairs there or anywhere.

London CAAT Challenging the War Machine

London CAAT activists greeted arrivals with a table of goodies at Declassified's “Challenging the War Machine” at the end of January. The event featured a wide range of speakers discussing the role of the arms trade in promoting war and oppression.

Declassified is a news outlet that continues to do great work highlighting the Government's duplicity in both (supposedly)

condemning violence while actively working to arm it.

London CAAT were joined in the tabling area by Demilitarise Education, CND, Stop the War, and Forces Watch among others, all of them having great conversations with those attending.

If you have an event coming up, and would like to have some CAAT materials, we can help! outreach@caat.org.uk

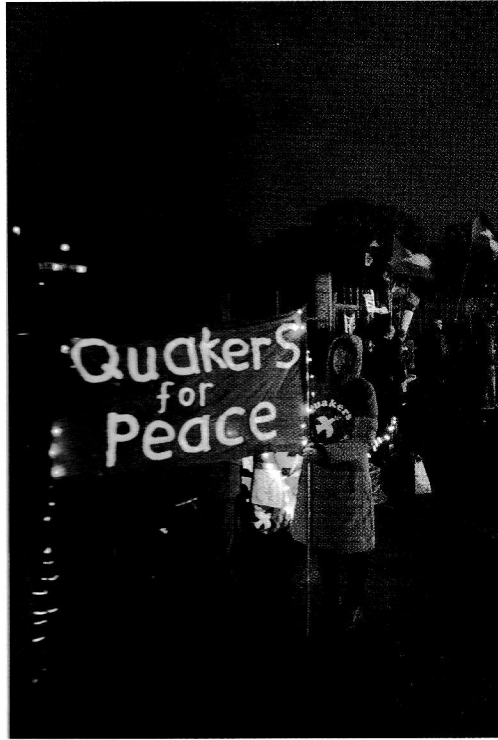


No Tanks, We're Farnborough!

The International Armoured Vehicles arms fair – which features tanks and infantry fighting vehicles – was chased out of Twickenham a couple of years ago.

This year, it was held in Farnborough and local groups including Quakers, North Hampshire Palestine Solidarity and CAAT supporters were there to tell delegates the arms fair was not welcome in their area.

The event is a celebration of deadly weaponry. There were over 70 arms companies in attendance at the fair including a number with deep links to the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza, including BAE Systems and Leonardo, which made components for



the F-35 warplane, pivotal to the destruction.

The people of Farnborough are unfortunate enough to have a range of arms fairs on their doorstep every year, with arms dealers often choosing to use the giant airbase to display their wares and rub shoulders away from the eyes of the public.

The secrecy makes it all the more important that we take a stand with local people who don't want such death and destruction on their doorsteps.

The energetic and noisy demonstration was visible to many going by on the busy road, getting the word out and building momentum to put a stop to this arms fair in Farnborough too!

The Scottish Parliament and Israel

In September 2025 the Scottish Parliament voted to introduce boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel, including a halt to government grants for arms companies that have enabled the genocide against Gaza.

There are concerns from activists due to the government updating its grant policy to allow future funding for companies that produce weaponry

Questions have been asked about how thoroughly the boycott has been implemented, with the Scottish government providing little in the way of detail. Meanwhile Edinburgh and Shetland Councils have voted to explore steps to enable them to boycott Israel, but both are dependent on the Scottish government backing them.



Photo: Reinhold Meller / Source: Wikimedia

There are also concerns from activists due to the government updating its grant policy to allow future funding for companies that produce weaponry.

Ministers have said this is in response to the war in Ukraine, but it is hard to see how this can co-exist with a policy against

funding companies that arm Israel as almost all major arms companies with a presence in Scotland also arm Israel.

With an election in May, CAAT activists will be challenging them on this and more and urging all parties to commit to policies that promote peace.

INSIDE THE WAR LOBBY

The Aerospace Defence & Security Group (ADS) is the UK's biggest arms trade lobby group. Every year it hosts an annual Dinner that brings arms dealers, executives and politicians together for a luxurious feast.

Taking place at the swanky Grosvenor House in Mayfair in January, it was the target of determined resistance.

At a minimum cost of £250 per head, it is a who's who of the powerful and militarist including Army generals, senior civil servants, MPs and government ministers. Those at the top tables pay big money to join them, with prices climbing to as much as £400 per head.

Of course the big bosses from all the major arms companies are there. It is literally where armed capitalism eats. The arms companies this year included BAE Systems, Thales, Raytheon, Leonardo, and Airbus. Around 1100 people were there for an "evening of entertainment, dinner and networking."

The dinners are the gathering of an overprivileged boys club: the guest list was 70 percent male. Almost all pale. And very, very stale.

From the British state, military and security attendees were about

evenly split: half from infantry or artillery regiments and such, half working in electronic surveillance, "cyber warfare" units, and spies.

Campaigners assembling nearby faced a police car being driven into the middle of the group, during a safety briefing (!), but quickly moved and began blocking the door of the gigantic "Great Room" hosting the banquet.

Those dining are yet to face justice. It is high time these disgraceful events were stopped

Protesters were loudly making the point that as the arms dealers feasted, Gaza, Sudan and Yemen all face food shortages, as a direct result of weapons deals of the kind being made at the event.

There was an extremely heavy police presence – we counted 150 officers – which began escorting diners past the activists.

The arms companies and their friends were celebrating a year

where the industry had seen the Strategic Defence Review output before it was shown to MPs – which was condemned by the Speaker of the House – and then pretty much wrote the Defence Industrial Strategy themselves, which funnily enough proposed more spending on weapons!

They did not get to quietly enjoy their victory lap, amid the noisy scenes greeting their arrival. There was one arrest from among campaigners, and there could have been many more if not for an alert and sympathetic passer-by who tipped off the protesters, who were able to get safely away.

Those dining are yet to face justice. It is high time these disgraceful events were stopped: each annual celebration of the profits from war crimes and genocide in Yemen, then Gaza, now Sudan simply perpetuates another round of blood letting. Campaigners will not rest until they come to an end.



RIP Patrick Delaney 1933–2025

CAAT are sad to learn of the death of former staff-member Patrick Delaney in December 2025.

Patrick was born in Sri Lanka in 1933. He worked as an engineer at Lucas Aerospace, and worked with the union organisers there who put together the Lucas Plan which sought to reorient the company to civilian production instead of military.

Never happy working in the arms industry, he started as a volunteer at CAAT in 1989 after being made redundant from Lucas, and later became a staff member in the mid-1990s, working at CAAT until his retirement in 2007.

He was responsible for packaging and sending out CAAT literature and materials to supporters and groups, a far busier role than in today's digital world. He was also a passionate photographer, often taking photos at CAAT demos and events.

Patrick's keen humour was always appreciated around the office and he will be missed by many at CAAT and across our movement.



Gaza Tribunal

CAAT was proud to take part in the Gaza Tribunal event at Westminster last year. Hosted by Jeremy Corbyn MP and peace activists, it was an exploration of UK complicity in the destruction of Gaza.

Katie Fallon, CAAT's Advocacy Manager, gave evidence to the Tribunal about the centrality of the F-35 programme for supporting Israel's genocide in Gaza.

THEY SAID IT

"We make the best weapons in the world, and we've got a lot of them. And we've given a lot to Israel, frankly."

Donald Trump speech to Israeli parliament, 13 October 2025

"I'm sorry. I won't be able to show you the cool pictures of missiles and things."

Airbus rep quoted while failing to work a projector at a school careers event, Bristol Cable, 15 November 2025

"I was asked to go. I just do as I'm told."

Labour MP Peter Prinsley explains why he took a trip to Israel funded by Labour Friends of Israel, Declassified, 02 October 2025

Support CAAT

CAAT would not exist without our supporters. Your generous support strengthens our work and helps to bring us closer to ending the arms trade.

As a campaigning organisation, CAAT is not a registered charity and therefore unable to take advantage of all the tax and funding benefits, including Gift Aid, open to charities.

We receive approximately 25% of our fundraising income from trusts and foundations that predominately funds our Research and Educational projects.

We are therefore very much reliant upon and incredibly grateful for your generous support of our campaigning and core work and for sharing our vision for a world without arms and peace and justice for all.

If you can, please consider making a donation via our website at [CAAT.org.uk/donate](https://www.caat.org.uk/donate) or by using the back page of CAAT News