



Arming Apartheid

UK complicity in Israel's crimes
against the Palestinian people



War on Want is a membership organisation of people committed to social justice, in the UK and around the world.

Our vision is a world free from poverty and oppression, based on social justice, equality and human rights for all.

Our mission is to fight against the root causes of poverty and human rights violation, as part of the worldwide movement for global justice.

www.waronwant.org

Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) is a UK organisation working to end the arms trade through public campaigning, lobbying, and direct action.

In seeking to end the arms trade, CAAT's priorities are:

- to stop the procurement or export of arms where they might exacerbate conflict, increase tension or support oppressive regimes
- to end all government support for arms exports
- to promote progressive demilitarisation

www.caat.org.uk

The Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) campaigns for peace and justice for Palestinians, in support of international law and human rights and against all racism.

Help us to build the movement against Israeli apartheid and for a Free Palestine.

www.palestinecampaign.org

For information, resources and to take action:

www.stoparmingisrael.org

War on Want, Campaign Against Arms Trade and Palestine Solidarity Campaign call on the UK government to implement an immediate two-way arms embargo to end all arms sales to and purchases from Israel.

Concretely, this means an immediate implementation of the following:

- The refusal of licences for exports to Israel (directly or via a third country) where the end-user is the Israeli military or military industry;
- The revocation of any extant licences for exports to Israel (directly or via a third country) where the end-user is the Israeli military or military industry;
- A ban on all arms imports from Israel;
- A ban on UK government facilitation of Israeli arms exports (such as by means of Israeli arms company participation in UK arms fairs);
- A ban on collaborations between UK-based companies and the Israeli military or military industry, and any activity by UK-based companies that supports the infrastructure of Israel's Occupation.

The Israeli assault on Gaza in July-August 2014, in which 2,205 Palestinians (including 521 children) were killed, is only the most recent example of Israel's indiscriminate acts of violence against the Palestinian people.¹ Yet the United Kingdom continues to treat Israel's defiance of international law as, at best, an inconvenient detail to be worked around when making decisions on arms trade control.

Israeli military and industry sources openly attribute the success of Israeli exports to the weapons and technologies being 'combat proven' in the Occupied Palestinian

Territories (OPT).² This means that when the UK imports Israeli arms, it is helping Israel benefit from unlawful practices. Despite Whitehall's official controls on arms exports, UK-made arms and military technologies continue to be sold to and used by the occupying Israeli forces. The value of licences awarded for export to Israel amounted to £11,615,840 for military use and £28,992,833 for dual (civil or military) use in 2014 alone.³ Importing arms from and selling arms to Israel makes the UK complicit in Israel's continuing violations of human rights and international law.

So long as the governments of the world engage in arms trade with Israel, Israel has no incentive to relinquish its unlawful use of force and its illegal colonies in the OPT. This is why four Nobel Peace laureates – Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, Mairead Maguire and Rigoberta Menchú – together with the former UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the OPT, Richard Falk, have accused the USA and the European Union of complicity in Israel's crimes and have backed the call for an international military embargo against Israel.⁴

War on Want, Campaign Against Arms Trade and Palestine Solidarity Campaign call on the UK government to terminate its support for the Israeli military. We encourage all readers to help us end the UK's complicity in Israel's systematic violation of international law, both during its direct military offensives and on a daily basis as it maintains its Occupation of the land and people of Palestine. Please join us by taking the actions recommended at the end of this report.

1 UK complicity in Israel's crimes

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Arming Apartheid UK complicity in Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people

Israel has recently fought three military campaigns in Gaza, during the winter of 2008-09, the winter of 2012 and the summer of 2014. In addition, Israel has held Gaza under siege since 2007, effectively imprisoning the Palestinian population of Gaza and limiting their supply of essential goods such as food, medicines and construction material.⁵

Aside from maintaining this siege and engaging in direct military attacks on Gaza, the Israeli army's primary ongoing task is to enforce the Occupation of the Palestinian land and people. In 2002, Israel began constructing a Wall in the Occupied West Bank, purportedly to prevent terrorist attacks, but in reality enclosing its major settlements and dividing Palestinian land, consistent with its policies of Apartheid. In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ),

noting the illegality of all Israeli settlement activity, declared that the Wall's construction ran contrary to international law and stated that it should be dismantled immediately.⁶ The UK continues to ignore the Advisory Opinion of the ICJ in respect of the Wall, which says that: "All States are under an obligation not to recognize the illegal situation resulting from the construction of the wall and not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction."⁷ Despite this explicit call on states to end their involvement in Wall-related activities, the UK has not taken any steps in that direction. In fact, the UK government continues to ignore the involvement of one of the UK's largest corporations – G4S – in providing security equipment to checkpoints at the Wall, despite civil society campaigns highlighting the company's involvement.⁸ The provision of security services and equipment by UK firms



UK Prime Minister David Cameron and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu



directly contributes to the oppression of the Palestinian people and the continuation of the Israeli Occupation. In 2014, under pressure from campaigners, G4S announced its intention to terminate some aspects of its involvement in illegal Israeli settlements.⁹ Campaigners have vowed to continue to pressure G4S until it entirely ends its role with all aspect of Israel's Apartheid regime.

In addition, the UK continues to export arms to Israel and to do business with the Israeli arms industry. In the six months prior to the attack on Gaza in the summer of 2014, the UK government granted licences worth £6,968,865 for military-use exports and £25,155,581 for dual-use equipment.¹⁰ The licensed items included combat aircraft components, drone components, anti-armour ammunition and weapon night sights.¹¹ Meanwhile, the UK's Watchkeeper surveillance drone has been developed under a £1 billion joint venture contract awarded by the Ministry of Defence to Thales UK and Israel's Elbit Systems, allowing the UK military to benefit from technologies that have been 'field tested' on the occupied Palestinians.¹²

UK exports to Israel

UK companies seeking to export arms and military technologies overseas must apply to the Export Control Organisation, part of the UK government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The government has criteria against which arms export licence applications are considered, which prohibit the use of UK arms exports for internal repression, external aggression or any other criminal behaviour overseas. In practice, however, the controls are interpreted so weakly as to allow sales that violate the criteria by any common sense definition.

What are the criteria used to license arms exports?

Arms exports licensing decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, using the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, adopted in October 2000.¹³ In a 2013 parliamentary answer, the then Minister of State for Business and Enterprise, Michael Fallon MP, said that three of the consolidated criteria were seen by the government as being particularly relevant to exports to Israel.¹⁴ These were:

1. Where there is a clear risk of the equipment being used for "internal repression";
2. Where the export would "provoke or prolong armed conflicts or aggravate existing tensions or conflicts"; and
3. Where there is a "clear risk that the intended recipient would use the proposed export aggressively against another country, or to assert by force a territorial claim."

It is notable that Fallon failed to mention the criterion stipulating that the government will take into account the buyer country's "respect for international law". As regards those criteria that the minister did choose to highlight, there is a clear risk of any arms exports to Israel being used for "internal repression" or "to assert by force a territorial claim," given that control of the OPT is a core function of the Israeli military. In addition, continuing to supply Israel with arms in spite of its behaviour clearly does "provoke or prolong armed conflicts or aggravate existing tensions or conflicts". **If the government's own export guidelines were properly applied on a case-by-case basis, the result would be a de facto embargo on arms exports to Israel.**

Table 1: Value of licences awarded for export from the UK to Israel since 2010¹⁵

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Military	£6,635,230	£4,720,249	£20,187,289	£10,042,185	£11,615,840
Dual Use	£17,032,038	£15,106,969	£57,594,218	£7,817,749,617	£28,992,833

Official figures on the value of export licences to Israel awarded by the UK government in any given year can be skewed by large single orders such as the £10 million licence for electronic countermeasure equipment in October 2012, or the £7.7 billion licence for cryptography equipment (categorised as dual-use, and described by the Export Control Organisation as being “for building mobile telephone network infrastructure in residential areas and for small businesses”¹⁶) awarded in February 2013. Allowing for these large single orders, the value of licences awarded tends to fluctuate within a fairly settled range, year on year, irrespective of Israel’s actions during conflicts such as Operation Cast Lead in 2008-09 or Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014.

Indeed, Whitehall continues to approve arms exports on a regular basis even in the immediate aftermath of such conflicts. In the three months after November 2012’s Operation Pillar of Defence, military goods with a value of £1 million and dual-use goods with a value of £28 million were approved for export, including a licence for components for military support aircraft and another for components for air to surface missiles in January 2013. In the final quarter of 2014, in the aftermath of Operation Protective Edge, military goods with a value of £3.3 million and dual-use

goods with a value of £1.7 million were approved for export. This included a licence for components for military aero-engines and equipment for the production of aero-engines, awarded in November 2014.¹⁷

While some licence applications may be refused, and others awarded but later revoked in light of new information, the broader picture is one of business as usual, where the UK supplies Israel with a steady stream of military equipment. The criteria can also be altered to allow some arms deals to go through. This was the case in 2002, when criteria were altered by former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw MP to allow the USA to incorporate Head-Up Display units (HUDs) in aircraft bound for Israel. Straw announced that the UK government would continue to assess such applications for the incorporation of UK manufactured arms components on a case-by-case basis against the consolidated criteria, while at the same time having regard to other factors such as:

- “the importance of the UK’s defence and security relationship with the incorporating country”, and
- “the materiality and significance of the UK-origin goods in relation to the goods into which they are to be incorporated, and in relation to any end-use of the finished products which might give rise to concern.”¹⁸

Israeli end-use guarantees are not reliable

In 2002 it emerged that armoured personnel carriers supplied by the UK had been used in the OPT despite previous assurances to the contrary. The then Foreign Secretary Jack Straw MP told parliament:

“The Israeli Foreign Ministry has said that the assurances given on 29 November 2000 were in good faith, and offered an explanation based on operational need about the use of the armoured personnel carriers in the occupied territories. They did not however accept that this was a breach of the assurances given and they have not committed to stop using the armoured personnel carriers in the occupied territories. In the light of this response we will (a) continue to assess export licence applications for the proposed export of controlled goods to Israel on a case-by-case basis against the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria; but (b) in so doing, we will no longer take the Israeli assurances given on 29 November 2000 into account. We also have questions about other possible breaches of the assurances

with regard to equipment supplied under previous Administrations, which we are taking up with the Israeli authorities.”¹⁹

In 2006, Kim Howells MP was questioned on the same matter:

Richard Burden: The Foreign Secretary in 2002 said in adopting the criteria “We will no longer take the Israeli assurances given on 29 November 2000 into account” and the assumption that I assume there is the fact that Israel said it would not be used in one way would not mean that you would necessarily believe them. Is that still the case?

Dr. Howells: Yes, that is very much the case. The Committee sought confirmation about assurances and the reply to a PQ [parliamentary question] on 15 April 2002, which you have referred to, *still holds true* about the use of assurances; we do not use them.²⁰ (emphasis added).

The sham of UK arms export controls – recent examples

Two recent cases disprove the government’s frequent claims that its arms export control regime is amongst the most rigorous and stringent in the world. These examples demonstrate that the current approach is neither rigorous nor stringent, and only a full two-way embargo can ensure that the UK will no longer be complicit in the Israeli state’s crimes and abuses.

The guns, but not the gunboat

In January 2009, the then Foreign Secretary David Miliband denied that any evidence existed of UK-manufactured equipment being used by the Israeli military in Operation Cast Lead.²¹ However, after considerable pressure from civil society, Miliband later admitted in a written statement to Parliament in April 2009 that Israeli combat aircraft, helicopters, naval vessels and armoured personnel carriers used in Operation Cast Lead “almost certainly” contained components manufactured and

sold by the UK.²² Display units for F-16 fighter jets – which have long terrorised Palestinians living under Occupation – had been sold to the USA, with the jets then sold on to Israel, as was also the case with the components used in Apache attack helicopters. Components for naval vessels and armoured personnel carriers had been sold to Israel directly. A few months later, following a further review, the UK government revoked five export licences for spare parts for guns used on the naval vessel Saar 4.5. These ships had reportedly fired missiles and artillery shells into Gaza during the 2008-09 conflict.²³ According to unnamed Israeli officials cited by the BBC, these were five out of an existing 35 licences relating to the Saar gunboat.²⁴

These licence revocations were applied as narrowly as possible, made under duress from civil society, and came too late to help the hundreds of civilian casualties of Israel's

assault on the Gaza Strip. It is particularly illustrative of the inadequacy of the UK government's case-by-case approach that only five of an apparent 35 licences relating to the Saar gunboat were revoked. This implies that, under the official interpretation of the consolidated criteria, it is fine to provide components for a naval vessel engaged in a military campaign in which there is copious evidence that war crimes were committed, provided those components did not relate to the guns on the gunboat themselves. So absurdly limited an application of the criteria allows UK arms manufacturers broad scope to equip the Israeli military in spite of its many crimes, in substantive contravention of any common sense definition of the government's own export guidelines.

“Significant hostilities”

A similar episode occurred in relation to Operation Protective Edge in summer 2014.



Israeli Navy strikes Gaza from the sea, 2014.



On 4 August 2014, UK Prime Minister David Cameron announced that the government would conduct a review of arms export licences to Israel.²⁵ On 12 August 2014, the government issued a statement saying that: “Twelve licences have now been identified for components which could be part of equipment used by the Israel Defence Forces [sic] in Gaza. Currently there is a ceasefire in place... in the event of a resumption of significant hostilities, the government is concerned that it would not be able to clarify if the export licence criteria are being met. It would therefore suspend these licences as a precautionary step.” Business Secretary Vince Cable added: “No new licences of military equipment have been issued for use by the Israeli Defence Force [sic] during the review period and as a precautionary measure this approach will continue until hostilities cease.”²⁶

In a letter to the chair of the Parliamentary Committee on Arms Export Controls dated 19 August 2014, Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said that, “in the event of a resumption of significant hostilities, and on the basis of information currently available to us, there **could be a risk that the items [covered by the 12 licences] might be used in the commission of a serious violation of international humanitarian law**” (emphasis added).²⁷ Violence resumed the following day and continued for several days, but the government did not deem this a “resumption of significant hostilities”, so the licences were not suspended.²⁸ In correspondence with solicitors for Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), Vince Cable, the Secretary of State responsible for the revocation of such licences, was unable to say how the government defined “significant hostilities”.²⁹ The results of this review and the implications for UK arms sales were the subject of a subsequent exchange of letters

between solicitors representing CAAT, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (which awards the licences) and the UK government’s lawyers. Full details of the correspondence can be found on CAAT’s website.³⁰

The UK government’s position appears to be that, even when it acknowledges a risk of UK exports being “used in the commission of a serious violation of international law”, it will not suspend (let alone revoke) the relevant export licences until after the commencement of the “significant hostilities” in which those violations would be committed (with “significant hostilities” remaining an undefined term). Until such time, that equipment will continue to be exported to Israel, irrespective of the fact that Israel has launched three attacks on Gaza in the past six years, at the cost of several thousand lives.

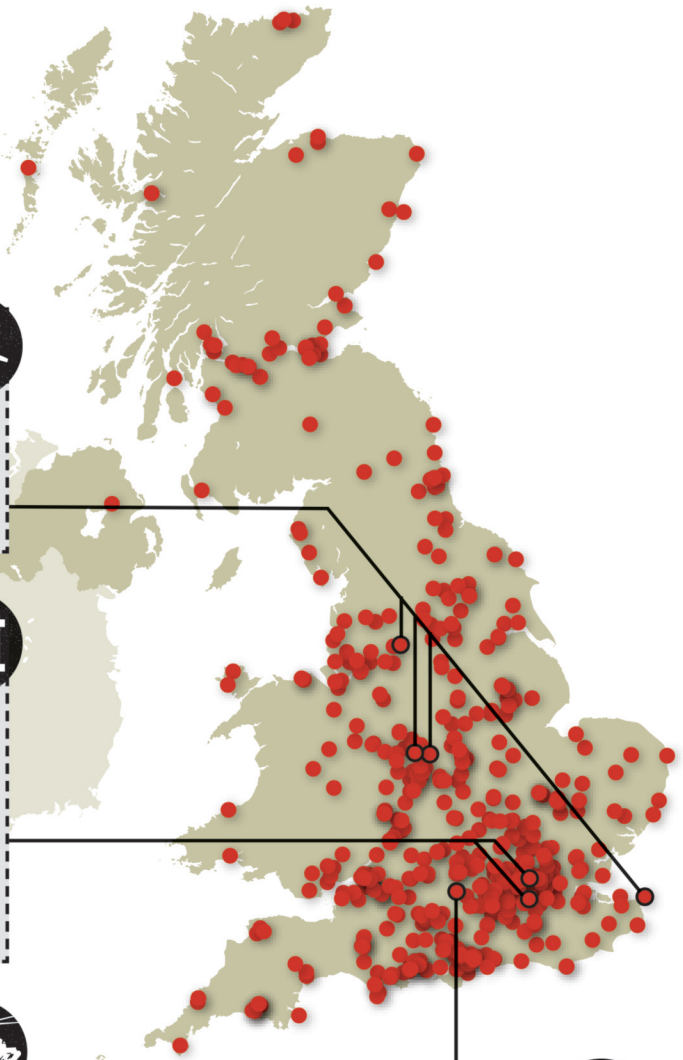
What both these examples demonstrate is that the UK government is intent on allowing arms exports up to the limits of what the embarrassment of bad publicity will allow. Even when those exports are subjected to public scrutiny, Whitehall will go to enormous lengths to justify their continuation, or minimal disruption. In any event, the risks attached to how the arms in question will be used appear to be treated as an irrelevance.


Beyond these specific episodes, and more fundamentally, the problem is not only with how the government applies its arms control criteria on a case-by-case basis, but with the case-by-case approach itself, which overlooks the broader reality of Israel’s institutionalised Occupation of Palestine. The Israeli state’s longstanding commitment to the Occupation means that “internal repression” and “asserting by force a territorial claim” in the OPT are core functions of the Israeli armed



Mapping Israel's suppliers

More than 100 companies supplying military and security equipment to Israel have bases in the UK. The map includes UK companies that sell arms or provide security services to Israel, UK sites of companies which sell arms to Israel and UK sites of Israeli arms companies. Find out more about the suppliers on your doorstep at caat.org.uk/map/israel



Elbit Systems (4 sites) 


Elbit is an Israeli arms company with four subsidiaries in the UK. It produces military electronics and unmanned aircraft systems including the Hermes armed drone. Protest interrupted operations at its Shenstone site during Israel's 2014 bombardment of Gaza.

G4S (2 sites) 


UK multinational G4S is the world's largest private security company. Its Israeli subsidiary provides services to prisons and detention centres where Palestinian political prisoners are held, and equipment and services to Israeli military checkpoints. In 2014, under pressure from campaigners, G4S announced an intention to end some aspects of involvement in illegal Israeli settlements, but campaigners have vowed to continue pressure on G4S until it entirely ends its role with all aspects of Israel's apartheid regime.

Boeing (6 sites) 

Boeing is a US-headquartered company with locations in the UK. Boeing manufactures the Apache attack helicopter, regularly used in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and its US arm markets Elbit's Hermes drones.

Schleifring (1 site) 

Schleifring Systems Ltd is a subsidiary of a German engineering company. It has applied for UK arms export licences to Israel and has said that it supplies components for the Hermes drone made by Elbit Systems and the Merkava IV main battle tank.

BAE Systems (50 sites) 

BAE Systems is the world's third largest arms company, headquartered in the UK. BAE provided Head-Up Displays for Lockheed Martin F-16 fighters for delivery to Israel in 2003. The UK government approved the export arguing that it did not want to harm "the UK's defence relations with the United States". BAE is one of three main companies building the F-35 fighter, which will replace the F-16.

Lockheed Martin (10 sites) 

Lockheed Martin is the world's largest arms company. It is headquartered in the US, with offices in the UK and Israel. It makes the F-16 fighter aircraft, used by the Israeli Air Force since 1980. Israel has so far purchased 33 of its F-35s to replace the F-16s.

Dots refer to multiple sites of identified companies which produce or export arms or services to Israel.



In the midst of Israel's attacks on Gaza in 2014, Elbit Systems showed video footage of its 'field tested' weapons at the Farnborough International arms fair.

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forces. In addition, continuing to supply Israel with arms in spite of its behaviour clearly does “provoke or prolong armed conflicts or aggravate existing tensions or conflicts”. This goes beyond questions of how individual components are used by the Israeli military. The broader problem is that successive UK governments have continued to grant moral and political impunity to the occupying state by arming it in spite of its actions.

Imports from Israel

In recent years, the UK has imported Israeli-made targeting systems for use on Tornado and Eurofighter combat aircraft. Under ‘Project Lydian’, the Israeli firm Elbit Systems helped provide \$110 million of drone technology to the UK for use in Iraq and Afghanistan.³¹ This was followed by the introduction of the Watchkeeper WK 450

unmanned aerial vehicle (drone) for the British armed forces, developed by Elbit Systems in a joint venture with Thales UK under a contract awarded by the MoD worth £1 billion. The Watchkeeper drone is based on the Israeli Hermes 450, which is in regular use over the OPT and in Israel’s assaults on the Gaza Strip.

In May 2006, the then Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram said that no assessment had been made of the ethical credentials of Elbit prior to awarding the UK Watchkeeper contract.³² Following Elbit Systems’ takeover in July 2007 of the British firm Ferranti Technologies (Group) Ltd, Elbit President Yossi Ackerman expressed his hope that the purchase would “reinforce Elbit’s relationship with the UK Ministry of Defence”.³³ Another detail of the UK-Israeli relationship emerged in September 2012 when the then Minister

of State for the Armed Forces, Andrew Robathan, stated that members of the Israeli military had come to the UK to attend education courses for military personnel in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2012.³⁴

Israel profits from war

Israel's military expenditure stood at US\$16 billion in 2013 (the latest year for which figures are available), which constituted 5.6% of the country's GDP.³⁵ Israel is one of the leading arms exporters in the world, its deliveries being comparable in value to those from China or France. Israel's arms exports doubled in value from US\$3.5 billion in 2004-2007 to US\$7.1 billion in the years 2008-2011.³⁶ As long as Israel benefits from the business of war and Occupation in foreign markets like the UK, it has little incentive to stop its unlawful acts.

The Israeli arms industry exports 70-75% of its production, with buyers in over 100 countries.³⁷ Recipients of Israeli arms exports in recent years include known human rights abusing states such as Colombia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia.³⁸ Israeli military and industry sources openly attribute the success of Israeli exports to the weapons and technologies being 'combat proven' in the OPT.³⁹ Neve Gordon, a politics professor at Ben Gurion University, told

Al Jazeera: "You only have to read the brochures published by the arms industry in Israel. It's all in there. What they are selling is Israel's 'experience' and expertise gained from the occupation and its conflicts with its neighbours."⁴⁰

EU complicity in Israeli oppression

Israeli arms companies benefit enormously from European Union expenditure. The EU's Framework Research Programme pours funds into security research, and Israeli firms are involved in 46 projects under the research programme. Participating companies include Elbit and Israel Aerospace Industries, both of which are deeply implicated in the Occupation of Palestine by supplying technology for the illegal Apartheid Wall. Elbit is a partner in five EU projects (three of which are ongoing) funded by the European taxpayer, totalling €29.2 million. Israel Aerospace Industries participates in 25 EU projects (10 of which are ongoing), totalling €215 million. Israel Aerospace Industries is a partner in the EU-funded OPARUS (Open Architecture for UAV-based Surveillance Systems) project, receiving an EU subsidy of €11.88 million for the development of drones.⁴¹

2 How Israel uses the arms

Israel uses arms to wage war on the Palestinian people, and to maintain the systematic and institutionalised oppression of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel's use of arms violates human rights and international law. The broader context into which the UK is exporting arms is one of

Apartheid and Occupation. As noted above, case-by-case evaluations of arms destined for Israel are inadequate in this case. Any military equipment received by Israel directly services the occupying forces and ultimately strengthens a regime of Apartheid which is contrary to international law.

Israel's Apartheid regime

Apartheid is the Afrikaans word for 'apartness'. It describes the system of racial discrimination that existed in South Africa until 1994. Today, 101 states are a party to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. According to Article II of that convention, the term applies to acts "committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them".⁴² The convention mentions specific examples of the crime of Apartheid, including subjecting a racial group to arbitrary arrest, expropriating their property, depriving them of the right to leave and return to their country or the right to freedom of movement and of residence, creating separate reserves and ghettos for the members of different racial groups and preventing mixed marriages.

Racial discrimination is inherent to Israel's Occupation regime. In 2012, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination expressed its concern at "policies and practices [in the OPT] which amount to de facto segregation, such as the implementation [...] of two entirely separate legal systems and sets of institutions"

for Palestinians and Israeli colonists.⁴³ The committee said it was "particularly appalled at the hermetic character of the separation of two groups, who live on the same territory but do not enjoy either equal use of roads and infrastructure or equal access to basic services and water resources." It reminded Israel of its responsibility to end "all policies and practices of racial segregation and apartheid". According to the Israeli human rights organisation B'Tselem, "Israel has created in the occupied territories a regime of separation based on discrimination, applying two separate systems of law in the same area and basing the rights of individuals on nationality. This regime is the only one of its kind in the world and is reminiscent of distasteful regimes in the past, such as the apartheid regime in South Africa."⁴⁴

The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee's position paper, 'United Against Apartheid, Colonialism and Occupation: Dignity & Justice for the Palestinian People', outlines the various aspects of Israel's commission of the crime of Apartheid, and traces the interaction between Israeli Apartheid, colonialism and Occupation from the perspective of Palestinian civil society.⁴⁵

The Israeli Occupation continues to devastate Palestinian life. Free movement is severely curtailed by a system of over 500 military-controlled checkpoints, barriers and gates. These restrictions, combined with Israel's control of 80% of water resources in the OPT, have stunted the growth of the Palestinian economy. Meanwhile East Jerusalem, the historic heart of Palestinian economic and cultural life, is being systematically severed from the rest of the West Bank by settlements and colonial infrastructure. In March 2014, Richard Falk, UN special rapporteur on human rights in the OPT, said that more than 11,000 Palestinians had lost their right to live in Jerusalem since 1996 due to Israel's imposing residency laws favouring Jews and revoking Palestinian residence permits. Falk accused Israeli policies of bearing "unacceptable characteristics of colonialism, apartheid and ethnic cleansing".⁴⁶

Palestinians are continually subjected to violence and human rights abuses at the hands of the occupying forces. In its 2013 world report, Amnesty International noted that hundreds of Palestinians had been imprisoned without charge or trial, with detainees reporting being subjected to torture. Israeli soldiers "routinely used excessive force against demonstrators in the West Bank, killing at least four" during 2012, as well as firing "tear gas canisters directly at peaceful protesters, causing serious injuries."⁴⁷ The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reported in 2013 that "Palestinian children are systematically subject to degrading treatment, and often to acts of torture" by the Israeli military and police.⁴⁸

Gaza 2014

"This is the third major military confrontation in Gaza in six years, and civilians have borne the brunt each time. They are paying the price for a collective failure to break the cycle of violence and reach a lasting political solution."⁴⁹

Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator at UN OCHA, July 2014

Israel has fought three military campaigns in Palestine in recent years. In Operation Cast Lead (2008-09), large areas of Gaza were "razed to the ground" by both "direct attacks on civilian objects" and "indiscriminate attacks" breaching "fundamental provisions of international humanitarian law", Amnesty International later found.⁵⁰ Human Rights Watch documented a number of incidents where civilians had been attacked while waving white flags at Israeli soldiers to show that they posed no threat.⁵¹ During Operation Pillar of Defence in November 2012, Israel again committed "war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law" carrying out "bomb and missile strikes on residential areas, including strikes that were disproportionate and caused heavy civilian casualties", Amnesty International documented.⁵²

During the latest attack in summer 2014, Operation Protective Edge, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights remarked that "there seems to be a strong possibility that international humanitarian law has been violated, in a manner that could amount to

war crimes.”⁵³ Over the course of Israel’s military campaign, children in a UN refugee shelter were shelled while they slept,⁵⁴ airstrikes hit schools,⁵⁵ a hospital⁵⁶ and a home for disabled people,⁵⁷ while family homes were destroyed with the inhabitants inside⁵⁸ and whole civilian neighbourhoods were levelled.⁵⁹ Human Rights Watch accused Israel of “blatantly violating the laws of war”, documenting instances in which Israeli soldiers had shot and killed fleeing civilians.⁶⁰

The pattern of Israel’s criminality during its military assaults on Gaza is clear and well documented. The implications inherent in the UK government’s continuing to license arms exports to Israel are indisputable.

Palestinian casualties in Gaza

Operation Protective Edge (2014):
2,205 Palestinian deaths, including 521 children,⁶¹ and 10,895 injured, including 3,306 children⁶²

Operation Pillar of Defence (2012):
174 Palestinian deaths, including 33 children,⁶³ and 1,000 wounded, including 274 children⁶⁴

Operation Cast Lead (2008/09):
1,383 Palestinian deaths, including 333 children,⁶⁵ and 5,303 wounded, including 1,606 children⁶⁶



“We must be careful about the endless enumeration of casualty numbers. The dead and injured in Gaza are not anonymous. Behind the figures lie multiple individual destinies now torn apart. Too often in their lives have Gazan civilians been denied their dignity [...]. They are human beings like others in the world, with their identity and the same hopes and expectations for an improved future for their children.”⁶⁷

Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner-General of the UN Relief & Works Agency, 2014

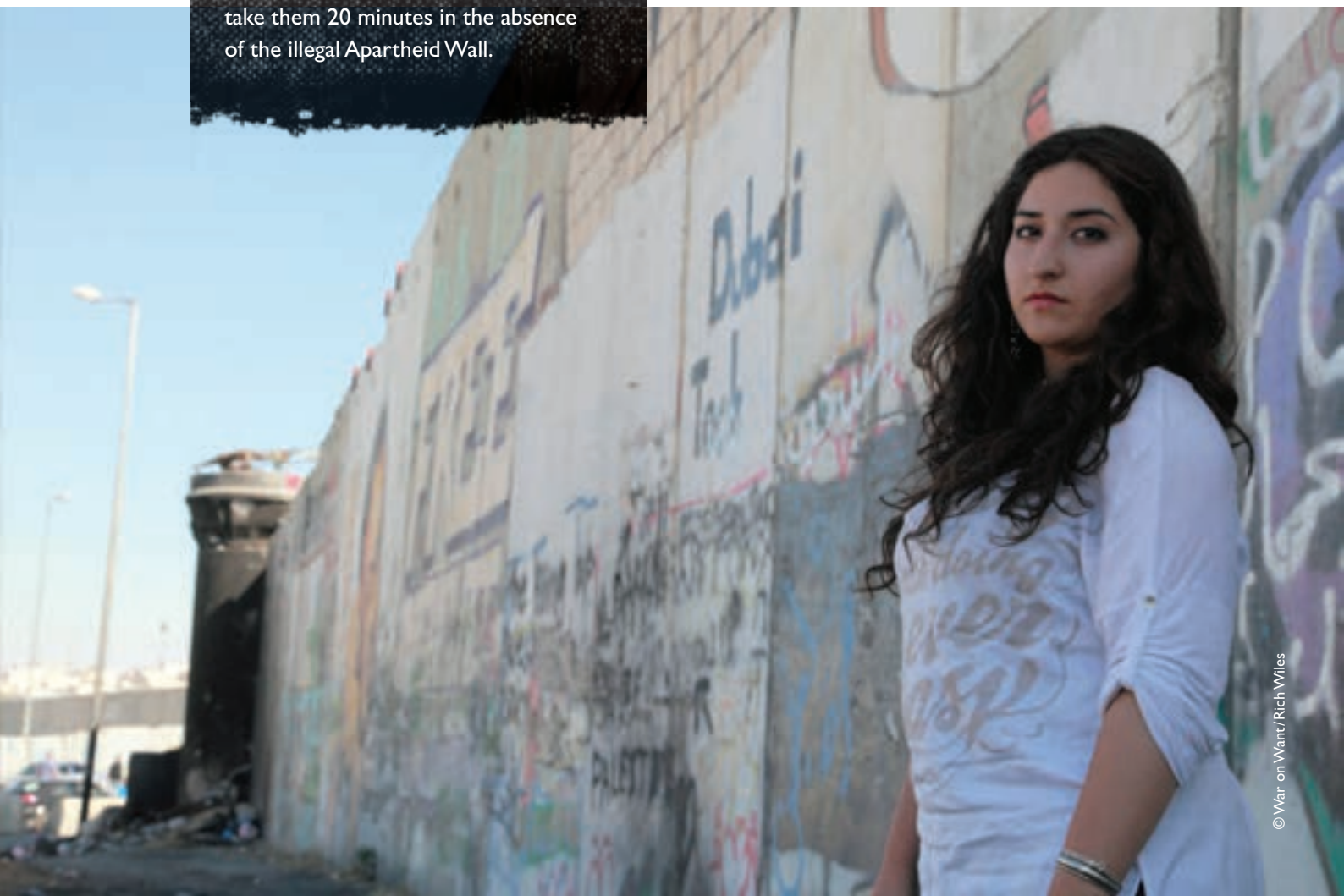
Mohammed Kutkut, 14, sits next to the name sign of his friend Ahed Qaddas, one of several of his classmates killed in the Israeli shelling of Jebaliya (northern Gaza Strip) in 2009.



“We have to wait for an hour or two at the checkpoint just to be allowed through. You can be in one of the queues and then they can just close the gate at any moment and you need to join another queue. Sometimes you have to go through the process two or three times depending on the soldiers’ mood.”

Hala Liddawieh

Hala Liddawieh and Nagham Yassin are 20-year-old Palestinian university students. They live in East Jerusalem and have to travel to Birzeit University passing through the Qalandia checkpoint every day. They spend up to six hours every day to travel a distance that would take them 20 minutes in the absence of the illegal Apartheid Wall.



In May 2014, while attending a demonstration, Nadeem Nawara, 17, and Mohammad Abu Daher, 16, were killed by an Israeli sniper. The Israeli military initially denied that live ammunition was used during the incident, although it was later revealed that the live round that killed one of the two teenagers came from a blanks magazine apparently rigged to conceal that live ammunition was being used.

According to Defence for Children International Palestine, Israeli security forces have killed over 8,896 Palestinians since 2000, at least 1,895 of whom have been children. Many of these deaths have occurred at demonstrations, during which Israeli security forces regularly use tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition against the unarmed civilian population.⁶⁸



Prominent calls for an arms embargo of Israel are usually made during or after a direct offensive by the Israeli military. Such was the case in 2006, when the then Liberal Democrat leader Menzies Campbell called for a suspension of arms exports to Israel, noting that the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had characterised Israel's attacks on Lebanon as collective punishment and that the UN Emergency Relief coordinator had described them as a violation of international law.⁶⁹ Similarly, in January 2009, Campbell's successor Nick Clegg said the UK government "must halt Britain's arms sales to Israel, and persuade our EU counterparts to do the same", arguing "there is a strong case that, given the Gaza conflict, any military exports contravene EU licensing criteria."⁷⁰

On August 2014, Baroness Sayeeda Warsi resigned from her post as Senior Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Minister for Faith and Communities at the Department for Communities and Local Government, saying "our approach and language during the current crisis in Gaza is morally indefensible, is not in Britain's national interest and will have a long term detrimental impact on our reputation internationally and domestically."⁷¹ Following her resignation, Warsi stated, "It appals me that the British government continues to allow the sale of weapons to a country, Israel, that has killed almost 2,000 people, including hundreds of kids, in the past four weeks alone. The arms exports to Israel must stop."⁷² The then Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg subsequently released a statement of support for Warsi, adding that arms exports to Israel should be suspended⁷³ (although as noted above, his Liberal Democrat cabinet colleague Vince Cable did not put such a suspension in place).

During Operation Protective Edge in 2014, the Spanish government took the decision to freeze military exports to Israel,⁷⁴ while a demand from Amnesty International that the UK cease arming Israel elicited 60,000 expressions of support from the public.⁷⁵

A two-way arms embargo should not be delayed until the Israeli occupying forces engage in the next direct offensive against the Palestinian people. The occupying forces' criminality in the OPT is ongoing and systematic. A concerted push should be made in the UK for a two-way arms embargo now and repeatedly until these demands are met. This means a total cessation of UK arms exports to and imports from Israel, and an end to any joint ventures between UK and Israeli arms companies.

Act Now: Stop Arming Israel

Help us increase the pressure on the UK government to end its arms trade with Israel and its complicity in Israel's Occupation and war crimes.

1. Email your MP to demand a two-way arms embargo against Israel. Go to stoparmingisrael.org to take action.
2. Support the Stop Arming Israel campaign. You can order campaign materials and book a speaker at stoparmingisrael.org.
3. Target your local arms dealer. Go to caat.org.uk/map/israel and enter your postcode to find out which arms companies are near you.
4. Support the Palestinian call for a global movement of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel. Visit waronwant.org/BDS or palestinecampaign.org/bds.

Notes

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War on Want

War on Want fights against the root causes of poverty and human rights violation, as part of the worldwide movement for global justice.

Cover picture: Smoke rises from the Tuffah neighbourhood after Israeli air strikes in the east of Gaza City, 29 July 2014.
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