



## Campaign to end the Irish arms trade with Israel launched in Dublin

*Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, April 2015*

A campaign calling for an end to the Irish arms trade with Israel was officially launched by the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC) at a press conference on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April. The campaign, which is supported by many public figures and civil society groups, is calling on the Irish government to place an immediate arms embargo upon the state of Israel. The campaign website address is <http://www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade> - and includes several simple actions people can take.

You can also [watch the full campaign launch by clicking here](#).

Dr. **DAVID LANDY**, an Irish-Jewish author, activist, scholar and IPSC national committee member introduced the campaign, explaining it was both timely and necessary because “government figures tell us that, Ireland has bought €14.7m worth of arms and military components from Israel over the last decade, while Irish-based companies have exported €6.42m worth of military and ‘dual use’ hardware to Israel over the past five years”.

The aim of the campaign was threefold, he said, “first we want to highlight that military items exported from Israel will have used Palestinians as ‘human test subjects’ so such weapons can be marketed as ‘battle proven’. Secondly, we want to bring attention to the fact that any military

components exported to Israel from Ireland will be used to kill and maim yet more Palestinians and to entrench the decades-long military occupation”.

“Indeed, Israel has killed over 9,000 Palestinians, since 2000 including 2,060 children, and tens of thousands more people have been injured. These lives matter. Thus, finally, we want to deliver the message that neither Israel nor arms manufacturers in Ireland should be allowed to profit from the killing of Palestinians; this trade in death must end. Therefore we are calling upon the government of Ireland to end the Irish arms trade with Israel, and to advocate for an international arms embargo at EU and UN levels until Israel ends the occupation of Palestinian land and complies fully with its obligations under international law.”



At the launch of the End the Irish Arms Trade With Israel Campaign. L-R: Elaine Bradley, Dr. David Landy, Yotam Feldman and Mahmoud Alhaj. *Image credit: Fatin Al Tamimi*

Dr. Landy explained what types of military equipment are being traded, saying that “according to the Irish government, just some of the items the Irish Defence Forces have bought from Israel include ‘small arms ammunition’, ‘an Artillery Fire Control System’, ‘Unmanned Aerial Vehicles’, ‘a Surveillance and Target Acquisition Suite for Light Tactical Armoured vehicles’ and ‘Ground Surveillance Radars’.”

He pointed out that “while Israeli arms companies promote such products with the slogan that they have been ‘battle-tested’, such sterile language masks the horrific reality on the ground. What this means, in plain language, is that these bullets, drones, targeting devices and other military items have been used – so-called ‘battle-tested’ – to viciously attack and kill the people of Palestine who live under Israel’s apartheid occupation regime. This should be unconscionable for a state like Ireland that claims ‘respect for and the promotion of human rights has always been and will continue to be a cornerstone of foreign policy’.

“Similarly,” continued Dr. Landy, “military components that are exported from Ireland to Israel are used to destroy Palestinian lives and livelihoods. Last summer we all watched in horror as Israeli occupation forces brutally assaulted the largely defenceless population of Gaza, killing over 2,200 people, 70% of them civilians, wounding thousands more, leaving over 100,000 homeless, destroying homes, medical facilities, schools and infrastructure. By allowing military exports to Israel, Ireland has played a role in enabling these, and many other crimes against the people of Palestine. This trade in death is a shame and a stain upon our state. While it may be ‘legal’, it is nevertheless of the utmost moral repugnance. It is time to end it.”

When asked if the campaign was aware of exactly what equipment had been exported and by which companies, Dr. Landy said that “as far as we know the Irish government has not yet released those kinds of details, but we call on them to make all such data publicly available.” (Note: See Appendix II for the information that has thus far been released by the government)

In conclusion, Dr. Landy stated that it was “very apt that we chose to launch this campaign on the same day as Palestine officially acceded to the International Criminal Court. Membership of the ICC is an important step towards ending Israel’s impunity for its continuing and well documented crimes against the Palestinian people. However, we believe that this alone will not be enough, and that as Western governments refuse to act to effectively sanction Israel, it is up to people of conscience to pressure them to do. This campaign to end the Irish arms trade with Israel is just one of the ways people can get active for justice and freedom for the Palestinian people. We urge you to log on to [www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade](http://www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade) to take action.”



L-R: Elaine Bradley, Dr. David Landy, Yotam Feldman, Mahmoud Alhaj, Fatin Al Tamimi (IPSC Vice Chair) and Martin O’Quigley (IPSC Chair). *Image credit: Fatin Al Tamimi*

**YOTAM FELDMAN**, the Israeli filmmaker, journalist and expert on the Israeli weapons industry whose film on the subject *The Lab* is currently touring Ireland said, “the world is hypocritical. Many of those governments, in Europe especially, which are criticizing Israel for the use of military force against civilians, collateral damage, etc., are the same governments which are buying weapons from Israel and which are allowing Israel to produce new weapons and use new weapons in Gaza. After every attack on Gaza, the Israeli arms manufacturers do bigger business than ever before.”

“Large Israeli companies develop and test the vessels of future warfare, which is then sold worldwide by private Israeli agents, who manipulate a network of Israeli politicians and army commanders, while Israeli theoreticians explain to various foreign countries how to defeat civil and paramilitary resistance. All based on the extensive Israeli experience,” continued Mr Feldman.

**MAHMOUD ALHAJ**, a Palestinian from the Nablus region of the occupied West Bank who now lives in Ireland spoke about the destruction that is caused by Israeli attacks on Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territories, pointing out the huge gap between the anodyne rhetoric and the brutal and bloody reality. “It is sickening to think that every time Israel kills a Palestinian man, woman or child, this is seen as a ‘victory’ for the weapons industry. Israel – with the West’s help, support and tacit encouragement - is turning Palestine’s blood into profits for the merchants of death both in Israel and internationally. Our people are not guinea pigs, Palestinian lives matter as much anyone else’s”.

**ELAINE BRADLEY**, a human rights activist and academic who recently returned from 8 months in Palestine, spoke about what she saw first-hand, saying that “Israel has bombarded Gaza with an arsenal of weapons that includes depleted uranium, white phosphorous, flechettes, DIME bombs and other unknown weapons – suspected to be chemical and gas in nature. Since Operation Cast Lead in 2008-2009 there have been alarming reports from medical personnel in Gaza about horrendous injuries that cannot be attributed to any known weapons.”

Ms. Bradley spoke about strange deaths that Palestinian doctors reported during last summer’s Israeli attack on Gaza. She quoted Dr Sobhi Skaik, the chief surgeon and medical director at Al Shifa hospital and a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh as saying that medical staff “saw third-degree burns that cannot be explained; neither flame burns nor chemical burns. It was as if the patient became mummified... Their skin blackened and their tissue became tough and solid. I saw dozens of patients like this”.

Ms. Bradley also quoted Ibrahim Abu Kas, an ambulance officer of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, who said that he “saw things I never could have imagined. The five children from the al-Jaal family in Zeitoun were the strangest thing I ever saw in my life. They were hit by an Israeli tank shell while their mother, father and grandmother sat in another room. Their bodies were hot. Their hair and skin were black like charred wood. But there had been no fire, only white smoke... [I also saw] more than a dozen bodies that looked normal, with no marks or wounds. But when we touched them they were slippery. If you tried to pick them up, the flesh fell off like jelly. We had to roll them in blankets.”

Ms. Bradley said these statements “chimed with what doctors that I interviewed in the West Bank where patients from Gaza had been transferred also reported: dead bodies, slippery to the touch that smelt strangely. They attributed these deaths to unknown chemical or gas weapons.”

Ms. Bradley concluded by highlighting the role Irish academia and enterprise, under the auspices of the EU, were playing in collaborating with Israel weapons manufactures, saying that “shamefully, Israel is aided and abetted in the development of this technology of death by research institutes throughout the world including many in Ireland. Renowned institutes such as Trinity College Dublin, NUI Galway and the University of Limerick have collaborated with Israeli drone makers Elbit Systems Ltd, and Israeli Aerospace Industries, along with Dublin Based technology company Skytek and Cork’s SR Technics Ltd. The R&D programmes that bring together Irish research institutes and enterprise with Israeli weapons manufacturers are funded by the EU under the Framework and Horizon 2020 programmes that pour millions of Euro into these collaborations.”

Following the launch, the campaign, in association with the Trinity College Dublin Apartheid Free Campus Campaign and Academics for Palestine, hosted its first event in Dublin, a screening of Israeli director and investigative journalist Yotam Feldman’s award-winning film The Lab in Trinity College. The film is an exposé which shines a light on the military-industrial complex in Israel and explores how it is helping to turn Palestine’s blood into Israel’s profit, a process aided and abetted by Western governments and institutions; following the film there was a lively discussion with the director who was touring Ireland.



Yotam Feldman speaking at Trinity College Dublin. *Image Credit: Michael Gallagher @L*



Dr. Ronit Lentin and Yotam Feldman at Trinity College Dublin.  
*Image Credit: Michael Gallagher @L*



Audience at the screening of The Lab at Trinity College Dublin.

*Image Credit: Michael Gallagher ©L*

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**[www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade](http://www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade)**

## **APPENDIX I – General background on the Israeli weapons industry**

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Israel is ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the world's top arms exporters in terms of volume of goods exported, while the Israeli daily *Haaretz* reports that it is ranked between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> in terms of value of goods exported. Military exports were worth about €7 billion per annum to the Israeli economy in 2012, and this has likely increased significantly. Of Israel's roughly 150 arms companies, three - Elbit, Israel Aerospace Industries and RAFAEL - are ranked in the SIPRI "top 100 Arms Exporters".

Furthermore, SIPRI data says that "Israel has supplied 60.7% of the world's drones since 1985", and 41% of all drones exported in the decade between 2001 and 2011. Last summer, Israel's 51-day bombing campaign against Gaza killed more than 2,200 Palestinians, the majority of them civilians, including more than 500 children. Based on data collected by the Al Mezan Center for Human rights, a Corporate Watch investigation found that at least 37 percent of those killed, or 840 people, died in Israeli drone strikes alone.

Just yesterday the Israeli military unveiled a new type of drone technology in the guise of the "Sea Knight", an unmanned patrol ship which will be used to fire upon Palestinian fishermen in the sea around Gaza. Since the so-called ceasefire of August 2014, Israel has killed at least two fishermen off Gaza, while at least 49 have been arrested, 17 wounded and 12 boats have been confiscated.

Israeli academia works hand-in-hand with this industry. For example, Israel's Technion university is launching a new training programme for professionals to enter Israel's growing "defence exports" industry. "People aren't aware of just how much money can be made in this field", said a programme lecturer, "Israeli high tech and Israeli security have good reputations – the combination is a winner".

## **APPENDIX II – Who supports this campaign?**

Alongside the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, the campaign has been endorsed by many politicians, public figures, NGOs, community groups and trade unions, including; Robert Ballagh; Sinn Fein; Sen. David Norris; Richard Boyd Barrett TD; Pdraig Mac Lochlainn TD; Paul Murphy TD; Sen. Averil Power; The Communication Workers Union; Afri – Action From Ireland; The Centre for Global Education; Palestinian Community in Ireland; Palestinian Rights Institute; Academics for Palestine; Gaza Action Ireland; Trade Union Friends of Palestine; Peace and Neutrality Alliance; Irish Anti-War Movement; TCD Apartheid Free Campus Campaign; and NUIG Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Internationally, noted supporters of an arms embargo on Israel include Nobel Peace Laureates Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, Adolfo Peres Esquivel, Jody Williams, Mairead Maguire, Rigoberta Menchú and Betty Williams; intellectuals and academics such as Noam Chomsky, Rashid Khalidi, Judith Butler, Ilan Pappé, and David Palumbo-Liu; artists such as authors Alice Walker and Michael Ondaatje, musicians Roger Waters, Brian Eno, and Boots Riley, and filmmakers Mira Nair, Mike Leigh, Ken Loach, and John Pilger. An arms embargo against Israel [is also called for](#) by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International.

## **APPENDIX III – DAIL QUESTIONS RE: MILITARY IMPORTS FROM & EXPORTS TO ISRAEL**

### **PQ 33030/14 - FOR WRITTEN ANSWER on WEDNESDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2014**

**Deputy RUTH COPPINGER:** To ask the Minister for Defence the amount the Defence Forces have spent on purchasing arms and equipment from Israeli companies in the past 15 years; if he will provide a breakdown of the figures according to year; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **REPLY**

**Minister for Defence, SIMON COVENEY:** The primary purpose for the procurement of defensive equipment by the Department of Defence is to enhance the capability of the Irish Defence Forces on overseas Peace Support Operations and to afford the greatest possible force protection to Irish troops whilst on such missions.

A number of Israeli companies have won orders for defensive equipment over the last decade as a result of tender competitions. Since 2005, the Department has purchased small arms ammunition, X-Ray equipment for Explosive Ordnance Disposal duties (EOD), helmets for personal protection, an Artillery Fire Control System, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, commonly referred to as UAVs, a Surveillance and Target Acquisition Suite for four Light Tactical Armoured vehicles and Ground Surveillance Radars from Israeli suppliers.

The total value of defensive equipment involved since 2005 is in the region of €14.7m, exclusive of VAT. In each case, the main contract was awarded by tender competition, conducted impartially on the basis that the company concerned had submitted the best tender. The attached Tabular Statement contains a list of all contracts awarded for defensive equipment by the Department of Defence's Contracts Branch to Israeli companies since 2005. The information sought in relation to the previous six years is not readily available within the Department.

Tender competitions for defensive equipment for the Defence Forces are conducted by the Department of Defence in accordance with EU procurement guidelines and with the EU Code of Conduct on Export Controls. Accordingly, competitions are open to any individual or country in accordance with the terms of all UN, OSCE and EU arms embargos or restrictions. To properly follow these guidelines and codes, the Department of Defence must deal impartially with all companies that are entitled to enter its procurement competitions and must evaluate tenders on the basis of objective criteria.

### **PQ 33781/14 - FOR WRITTEN ANSWER on WEDNESDAY, 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2014**

**Deputy RUTH COPPINGER:** To ask the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the number of dual-use licences and military-use licences issued for trade with Israel in the years 2011, 2012, 2013 and to date in 2014; if he will provide descriptions of the products that were licensed; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

### **REPLY**

**Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, RICHARD BRUTON:** My Department is responsible for controls on the export of military items from Ireland. Under Irish law, military export licences have to be sought in respect of the goods and technology, and any components thereof, listed in the Annex to the Control of Exports (Goods and Technology) Order, SI.216 of 2012 which reflects the EU Common Military List.

The EU Common Military List includes military goods and technology, and components for such items that should be licenced for export from the Union. Items which are classified as “military goods” from an export control perspective and which are exported from Ireland involve components rather than military equipment.

Eleven licences for the export of Military List items to Israel have been issued from 2011 to date. Details are provided below:

#### **2011**

Three licences for the export of Military List products to Israel were issued in 2011, to the total value of €6.138 million. Two licences were issued for Military List (ML) “category 6” items while one was issued for ML “category 22” items. The ML “category 6” refers to “Ground Vehicles and Components”, while ML “category 22” refers to “Technology”. “Technology” is that which is “required for the development, production or use of items or components specified in the EU Common Military List”.

#### **2012**

One licence for the export of Military List products to Israel was issued in 2012. The value of the licence was €39,525 and it was issued for ML “category 6” items, i.e. “Ground Vehicles and Components”.

#### **2013**

Five licences for the export of Military List products to Israel were issued in 2013, to the total value of €119,971. Two licences were issued for ML “category 6” items while three were issued for ML “category 10” items. The ML “category 10” refers to “Aircraft, lighter-than-air vehicles, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles “UAVs”), aero-engines and aircraft equipment, related equipment, and components”.

#### **2014**

Two licences for the export of Military List products to Israel were issued during the first quarter of 2014, to the total value of €126,637. Both licences were issued for ML “category 6” items. No licences for the export of Military List products to Israel have been granted since the end of the first quarter of 2014.

It is important to recall that items which were classified as “military goods” from an export control perspective and which were exported from Ireland involved components for inclusion in, rather than finished military equipment. These components were generally exported to manufacturers in Israel before being sent to the final end-user in Israel.

My Department is also responsible for licensing those dual-use items controlled pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No. 428/2009 setting up a Community regime for the control of exports, transfer, brokering and transit of dual-use items. Summary data on dual-use licences issued from 2011 to date in respect of exports to Israel is provided below.

#### **Individual dual-use licences issued in respect of exports to Israel**

Year	Dual-Use Category	Number of Licences Issued	Value of Licences	Value of Licences
			€0 - €100,000	Above €100,000
<b>2014 (to date)</b>	3	2	X	
	5	10		X
<b>Total number of licences issued</b>		12		
<b>2013</b>	2	2	X	
	5	12		X
	7	6		X
<b>Total issued</b>		20		
<b>2012</b>	2	1	X	
	4	1	X	
	5	18		X
<b>Total issued</b>		20		
<b>2011</b>	2	2	X	
	3	1		X
	5	9		X
<b>Total issued</b>		12		

The dual-use categories correspond to the product category classifications as set out in Annex I to the Dual-Use Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No. 428/2009, as amended):

Category 2: Materials Processing

Category 3: Electronics

Category 4: Computers

Category 5: Telecommunications and “information security”

Category 7: Navigation and avionics

Israel is also included as a destination on a proportion of the small number of global dual-use licences issued by my Department each year. These licences are issued subject to a number of strict conditions, such as a prohibition on their use for exports to military, police or State security forces end users. An application for an individual dual-use licence must be made for such exports.

While the term “dual-use” refers to those items that are normally used for civilian or commercial purposes but may also have a military application, the vast majority of dual-use licences issued by my Department are for commercial purposes.

My Department consults with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in respect of all military and dual-use export licence applications in respect of Israel. All applications for export licenses are very carefully assessed having regard to the end use and the end user and against well-established criteria. Applications for the export of Military List items are considered in the light of the spirit and objectives of the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports which seeks to safeguard, among other concerns, regional stability and human rights.

Finally, it is important to note that the figures provided above represent the maximum value which can be exported under the above export licences and not the value of the goods and technology actually exported under those licences.

## **Sign the petition here:**

**[www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade](http://www.ipsc.ie/noarmstrade)**