

Protesters shut down UK arms factory to disrupt Israeli war machine



London, November 10 (RHC)-- Hundreds of trade union members have blocked the entrance of Britain's largest weapons maker, calling for an immediate end to arms supplies to Israel amid the regime's brutal military campaign in the Gaza Strip.

Demonstrators gathered outside the gate of the BAE Systems site in Rochester, Kent, on Friday. They were holding Palestinian flags and chanting slogans like "Stop Arming Israel," "ceasefire now," and "How many kids have you killed today?" One organizer said more than 400 trade unionists were involved in the action at the site.

Union members were calling for "an end to the UK government's complicity in war crimes being committed in Palestine", which includes an end to arms sales to the occupying regime and support for an immediate ceasefire.

A teacher and member of the Nation Education Union, who took part in the protest said, "As a teacher, seeing 185 schools and other educational institutions in Gaza bombed is utterly heartbreaking."

"We're here today to disrupt the Israeli war machine and take a stand against our government's complicity and we urge workers across the UK to take similar action in their workplaces and communities," she added.

The factory, run by BAE Systems, claims it does not directly export equipment to Israel. Activists say the company - which includes the site being blockaded - "provides 15% of the components in the F-35 fighter jets that are currently being used in the bombardment of Gaza."

The value of components supplied by BAE Systems to Israel could be worth more than £300 million since 2016, according to campaigners. Similar protests were also held outside Israeli-owned factories in Britain.

Two of Israel's biggest weapons factories, Elbit and Rafael, both have operations in the United Kingdom.

The governments of the UK, the United States and the European Union member states have been providing Israel with weapons and military assistance, since the regime launched its genocidal campaign in the Gaza Strip on October 7th.

Palestinian officials in the besieged Gaza Strip say the Israeli regime has dropped more than 32,000 tons of explosives on the territory in its ongoing war of aggression.

Israel's ongoing bombardment of the besieged enclave has now killed and injured more than 40,000 Palestinians, most of them women and children.

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