

West keeps arming Israel despite calls to end complicity in Gaza genocide



Pro-Palestine protesters block the entrance to the UK's BAE Systems weapons factory, in the town of Rochester, on November 10, 2023. (Photo by Reuters)

Washington, July 5 (RHC)-- Western states, particularly the United States, Germany, Italy and Britain, continue to be the main suppliers of lethal weapons to Israel in defiance of calls to end their complicity in the regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip, reports say.

They are pushing ahead with their arms trade with Israel despite the possibility of being guilty of aiding and abetting Israeli war crimes against Palestinians.

Back in April, the United Nations Human Rights Council passed a resolution that called on countries to "cease the sale, transfer and diversion of arms, munitions and other military equipment to Israel" to prevent the occupying regime's human rights abuses and violations of international law.

The document was adopted by 28 votes in favor, six against and 13 abstentions. Among the countries that opposed the resolution were the US and Germany, Israel's biggest arms suppliers.

The U.S. provided 69 percent of Tel Aviv's imports of weapons between 2019 and 2023, according to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Washington has significantly bolstered its military support for Israel since early October, when the usurping entity waged its brutal war on the besieged Gaza.

The transfers include air defenses, precision-guided munitions, artillery shells, tank rounds and small arms, the Washington-based Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) reported.

Last month, Israel approved the purchase of a third squadron of F-35 stealth fighter jets from the US in a deal worth \$3 billion. The aircraft manufactured by Lockheed Martin will bring the number of F-35s in Israel's air force to 75.

Germany is the second-biggest weapons exporter to Israel, accounting for over 25 percent of Tel Aviv's imports of arms in 2019-2023. Berlin has mainly supplied Israel with submarines, warships, vehicles and aircraft engines, as well as torpedoes. It had approved \$326 million (\$352 million) worth of weapons sales to Israel before October 7, and continued to permit licenses for the transfer of more military equipment to the regime.

Italy is the third largest arms exporter to Israel and accounted for 0.9 percent of Israeli imports between 2019 and 2023. Italian media reported that the country delivered weapons and ammunition to Israel worth \$2.1 million (\$2.27 million) in the last quarter of 2023.

"In December alone, now in the middle of the bombings by the Israeli army and air force on the Gaza Strip, with catastrophic consequences for the civilian population, Italian exports reached 1.3 million Euros, thus marking the peak of the period (against 233,025 Euros in October and 584,511 in November)," the Italian news magazine *Altreconomia* reported. A total of 345 licenses to sell arms to Israel were still active as of the end of May, according to government figures.

The UK is another arms exporter to Israel. British companies like BAE Systems are supplying the regime with components used for F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighter jets, according to London-based Action on Armed Violence.

Meanwhile, the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) reported that the UK has authorized arms exports valued at £560 million (\$715 million) to Israel since 2008. "This does not capture the full scale of UK military exports to Israel as many arms export licenses to Israel are 'open' and there is no cap on the number of licensed exports or their value; and many licenses are for the US, for incorporation into bigger weapons systems for onward export to Israel," CAAT said.

"The most traceable exports from the UK to Israel are components for the F-35 fighter jet and the F-16 – both of which are used by" the Israeli military in Gaza, it added.

Israel launched its bloody Gaza onslaught on October 7 after the Hamas resistance group carried out Operation Al-Aqsa Storm against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against Palestinians.

So far, Israel has killed at least 38,011 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injured 87,445 others.

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