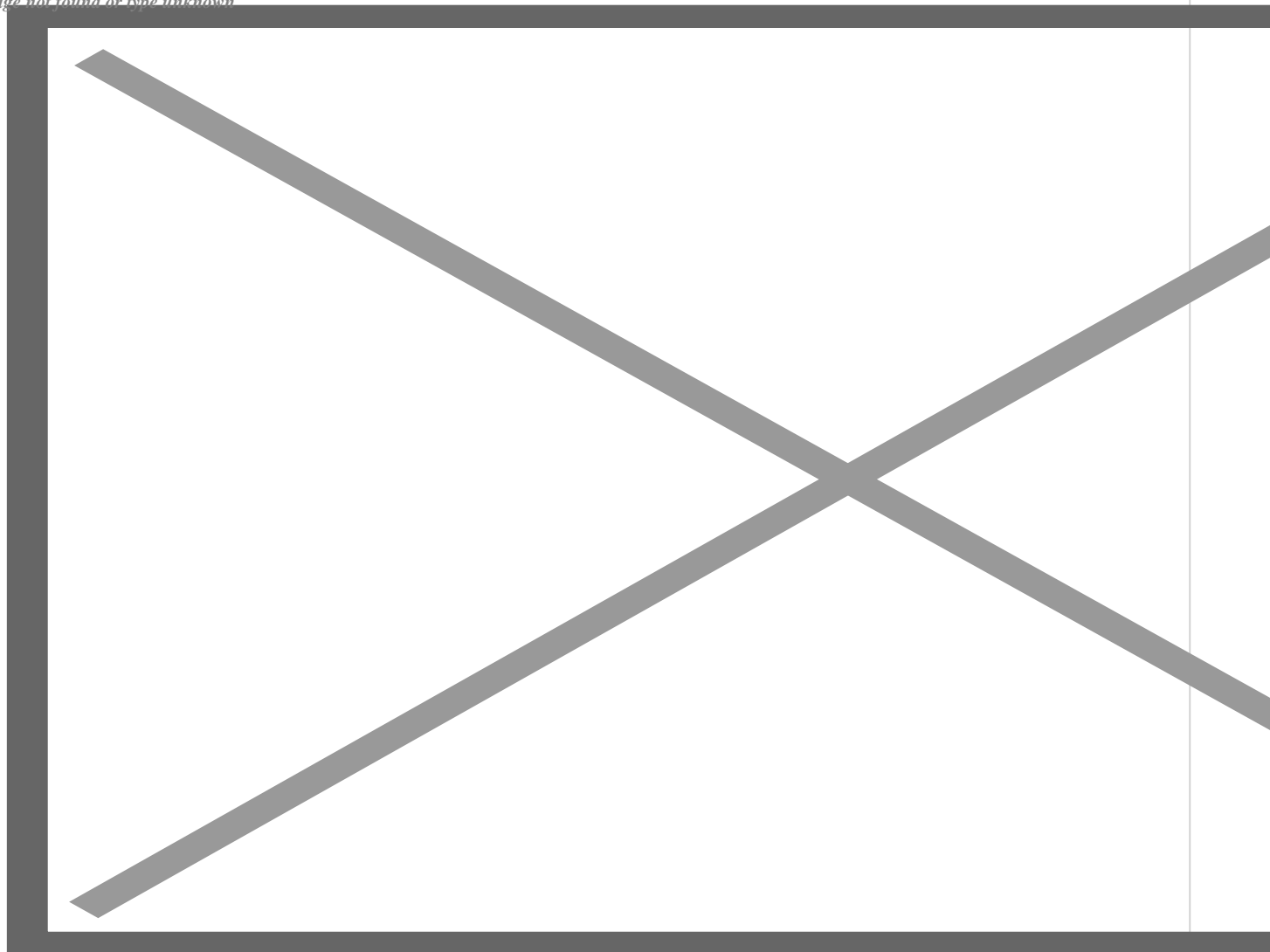


Outcry in Italy over arms exports to Israel amid genocide in Gaza

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Thousands of people joined a 'Stop the Genocide' rally in the Italian capital on Saturday organized, among others, by the movement of the Palestinian students and the Association of the Palestinians in Italy.

Milan, March 19 (RHC)-- Hundreds gathered at Piazza San Babila in Milan to display their solidarity with the Palestinian people in Gaza and to call for a ceasefire in the besieged territory.

The Italian Minister of Defense, Guido Grosetto, has recently stated that Rome has continued to export arms to Israel despite assurances last year that the government was blocking such sales following Tel Aviv's invasion of the Gaza Strip.

At the rally, Bruno Papale, with the Solidarity for Palestinians Committee, said: "Western governments have been systematically supporting Zionism and Israel's criminal regime, notwithstanding the protest against Israeli crimes that have been taking place across the globe. Italy's support to Tel Aviv must stop once and for all."

UN experts say any transfer of weapons to Israel is likely to violate international humanitarian law. Some Italian media reports recently revealed that, despite the Italian government's denials, the value of arms sales to Israel more than tripled in December 2023 compared with the same month in 2022, and December last year, was the peak of Israeli bombardments on the Gaza Strip.

Protesters at the rally affirmed that a solution to the onslaught in Gaza could be found if the international community stopped militarily supporting Israel. Italy on its side has been actively arming Israel through companies such as Leonardo and others.

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