

Campaigners call on F-35 partner states to end supplies to Israel

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F-35 fighter jets take part in war games at the Ovda air force base, north of of Eilat in the

Washington, February 19 (RHC)-- More than 200 civil society groups worldwide have urged countries involved in the US-led defense firm Lockheed Martin's F-35 jet program to halt arms transfers to the Israeli regime over fears of humanitarian law violations.

The organizations signed a letter sent to government ministers in Britain, the U.S., Australia, Canada, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway on Monday.

The 232 signatories, including leading charities and human rights groups, come from the countries involved in the production of F-35. The letter says partners to the F-35 program have "individually and collectively failed to prevent these jets from being used to commit serious violations of international law by Israel."

"The past 15 months have illustrated with devastating clarity that Israel is not committed to complying with international law."

"States have either been unwilling to observe their international legal obligations and/or claimed that the structure of the F-35 program means that it is not possible to apply arms controls to any end-user, making the entire program incompatible with international law."

F-35 has been used extensively by the Israeli regime to conduct bombing operations over the past months. Israel is part of the agreement behind the F-35 program. British firms supply 15 percent of the parts used in the jet.

Governments including those of Britain, the US, Australia and Canada have faced legal action over their involvement in granting arms licenses to Israel that include F-35 components.

In September 2024, Britain suspended 30 out of 350 arms export licenses to Israel over fears that the weapons may be used to violate international humanitarian law.

Israel has massacred more than 48,300 people in Gaza since October 2023, with some researchers saying the death toll could be up to 40 percent higher than the number recorded by the Gaza Health Ministry.

Katie Fallon, advocacy manager at the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), said the F-35 program is emblematic of the West's complicity in Israel's crimes against Palestinians. "These jets were instrumental in Israel's 466-day bombardment of Gaza, in crimes that include war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide."

"Since the limited ceasefire the US government, and lead partner to the F-35 program, has threatened Gaza with mass ethnic cleansing and forced displacement. This program gives material and political consent from all western partners, including the UK, for these crimes to continue."

Over 76,000 tons of military equipment, the vast majority of them from the States, were delivered to Israel in the course of the campaign of genocide in Gaza, according to the latest figures released by the Israeli ministry of military affairs.



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