

**You say 'don't buy'  
I say 'don't sell'  
Let's call the arms trade off**

**July 2019**

**TIPPING POINT NORTH SOUTH**

**A co-operative that supports and initiates creative, campaign-driven projects that  
advance the global social justice agenda**

## MILITARY SPENDING: A HIDDEN DRIVER OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The global military is a major driver of climate change. At UN level it is exempt from reporting its carbon emissions despite some countries' militaries being among the largest consumers of fossil fuels in the world. It is a scandal that needs exposing.

Runaway global military spending fuels this state of affairs and impedes development in myriad ways: *as a matter of urgency* it must be put centre-stage as an international development, environment and human safety concern.

All current *Green New Deal* economic thinking (in the UK, Europe, the USA and elsewhere) must take account of the links between these closely linked issues: military spending and climate change.

***Don't buy don't sell*** is one of Tipping Point North South's *Five Percent Proposal* series of reports and briefings that offer a framework and a formula for progressively converting military spending into funding for development, strengthening human safety, and averting climate catastrophe.

The *Five Percent Proposal* project is funded by Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation and is a project of Tipping Point North South.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Report researched by Dr. Ho-Chih Lin and written by Dr. Ho-Chih Lin and Deborah Burton

Tipping Point North South is a 'for the benefit of community' co-operative, supporting and initiating creative, campaign-driven projects that advance the global social justice agenda.

### CONTACT US

T: +44 (0) 20 8847 0377      E: [info@tippingpointnorthsouth.org](mailto:info@tippingpointnorthsouth.org)

W: <https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/> and <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org>

## CONTENTS

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Context</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Blood on our hands</b> .....	<b>7</b>
UK.....	9
USA.....	11
France.....	14
<b>Don't Buy Don't Sell</b> .....	<b>15</b>
The world's buyers and sellers .....	15
The concept: don't buy don't sell .....	16
Example: (don't buy) Saudi Arabia & (don't sell) UK, France, USA & Germany.....	17
Germany is a good example, concerning Saudi arms trade. ....	17
Campaigning In the UK.....	18
Saudi Arabia & Norway, Finland, Denmark and Netherlands.....	19
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>19</b>

## FOREWORD

Through its **Five Percent Proposal**<sup>1</sup>, [Tipping Point North South](https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/)<sup>2</sup> (TPNS) has been building the case that global runaway spending is of profound relevance to international development, the global green economy and, increasingly, climate change. It argues that runaway military spending should therefore be of much more serious concern than at present to those working in the international and development sectors, both NGOs and politicians alike, and calls for them to make a much greater effort to engage with it.

Historically, military spending has been central to re-enforcing power, poverty, unjust distribution of resources, economic and environmental collapse. We need a very different starting point to consider and address the almost \$2 trillion annual global military spend and it should be *sustainable human safety*.

Meantime, the latest research from SIPRI shows:<sup>3</sup>

The volume of international transfers of major weapons has grown continuously since 2004 and increased by 7.8% between 2009–13 and 2014–18. The flow of arms to the Middle East increased by 87% between 2009–13 and 2014–18 while there was a decrease in flows to all other regions. The six biggest exporters — the United States, Russia, France, Germany and China — together accounted for 80% of arms exports (by volume). The hypocrisy is plain to see. These 6 countries are the UN P5+1; the permanent members of United Nations Security Council plus Germany who are supposedly responsible for ensuring international peace and security but are in fact the biggest arms dealers in the world.

With a one-third share of global arms exports, the USA was the top arms exporter by far. More than half of its arms exports went to the Middle East. US arms exports to that region increased by 134 per cent between 2009–13 and 2014–18. The USA supplies major arms to at least 98 countries around the world—significantly more than any other supplier state.

The combined arms exports by European Union (EU) member states accounted for 27 per cent of the global total in 2014–18. The top five arms exporters in the EU — France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy — together accounted for 23 per cent of the world's arms exports in 2014–18, compared with 21 per cent in 2009–13. For four of these countries, the region that accounted for the highest growth in exports was the Middle East. Specifically, 44% of French arms exports went to the Middle East; 20% of German arms exports went to the Middle East; whereas 59% of British arms exports went to the Middle East, the vast bulk of which was made up of deliveries of combat aircraft to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

The five largest importers were Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia and Algeria. Between 2009–13 and 2014–18 arms imports by states in the Middle East rose by 87% and accounted for 35% of global imports in 2012–16. Four of the world's top 10 arms-importing countries in 2014–18 were in the Middle East: Saudi Arabia, which received 33% of arms transfers to the region, Egypt (15%), the United Arab Emirates (11%) and Iraq (11%). The USA supplied 54% of total arms transfers to the region, Russia 9.6% and France 8.6%.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Five Percent Campaign website. <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/>

<sup>2</sup> Tipping Point North South website. <https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/fs\\_1903\\_at\\_2018.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/fs_1903_at_2018.pdf)

Arms imports by Saudi Arabia increased by 192% between 2009–13 and 2014–18, making it the world's largest arms importer in 2014–18. The USA supplied 68% of Saudi Arabian arms imports. Arms deliveries to Saudi Arabia in 2014–18 included 56 combat aircraft from the USA and 38 from the UK. In both cases, the aircraft were equipped with cruise missiles and other guided weapons.

In 2014–18 the UAE was the seventh largest arms importer in the world. The USA accounted for 64 per cent of arms imports by the UAE. Deliveries in 2014–18 included 5 missile defence systems, 124 short-range ballistic missiles and 1671 armoured personnel carriers from the USA, and 3 corvettes from France. Some of the armoured vehicles were subsequently supplied by the UAE to militias in Yemen.

Unquestionably, the global arms trade is showing no sign of slowing down. When every major country in the world is hyping up militaristic rhetoric and playing up possibilities of conflicts in some parts of the world, it is hardly surprising that's the case. Every country in the high conflict-risk region has been driving up their arms imports, and they are mostly buying from the richest and democratic countries (e.g. USA, UK, France and Germany), Russia or China. By value, richest and democratic countries sell arms mostly to each other but by volume, they overwhelmingly sell to the global south.

This is precisely the time for peace movement, international development groups, human rights and environmental movements to put centre-stage calls for cuts to both military spending and carbon emissions and for an international civil society call 'Don't Buy Don't Sell' to be taken up as never before – led by those of us in the arms-selling global north.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> See Five Percent Campaign <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/the-five-percent-campaign/military-spend-is-a-development-issue/>; Don't Buy Don't Sell Germany/Turkey; BAE; Israel

## CONTEXT

Saudi Arabia and its Gulf partners, including the UAE, commenced the conflict in Yemen in March 2015, claiming it was to retake the capital, Sana'a, from the Houthi rebels. Several years later, after 20,000 bombing raids on Houthi-held areas by the Saudi-UAE alliance, the Houthis have actually consolidated their grip over large parts of Yemen.<sup>5</sup> The Houthis has always been regarded by the Saudis and many politicians in the West as Iranian proxies, but the reality was before the Saudi-led coalition's attack in Yemen, Iran's support for the Houthis was limited and far from sufficient to buy any significant measure of influence. Despite Saudi Arabia's stated aim to roll back a mostly fictitious Iranian influence, its war is having the opposite effect.<sup>6</sup> The immorality and incompetence of the Saudi-UAE alliance not only makes this war a complete military failure but also an unprecedented humanitarian disaster.

"The current conflict in Yemen is one of the greatest preventable disasters facing humanity... If that war continues it will continue to disproportionately kill children, mostly due to a lack of access to food, health services and infrastructure. It is already placed among some of the worst conflicts since the end of the Cold War," the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP, 2019) assessment of the Yemen War concluded.<sup>7</sup>

Their assessment of the situation and future prospect is dire: the total death toll of the war (directly and indirectly) will reach 233,000 if the war does not end in 2019 - 60% of the dead will be children under the age of five; and if the war continues to 2030, the war will kill nearly 2 million Yemenis by then. The war has already set back Yemen's 'human development'<sup>8</sup> by 21 years (back to 1998); if the war persists to 2030, the setback grows to nearly 40 years (back to 1991) - nearly half a century development (across demographic, economic, education, infrastructure, health, etc.) completely wasted.

The Saudi-UAE alliance used starvation as a weapon of war by deliberately targeting the infrastructure of Yemen's food production and distribution, including the agriculture and fishing industry and by destroying Yemen's food supplies and distribution systems. Martha Mundy, an emeritus professor of anthropology at the London School of Economics, found that after it became clear that a quick military victory was impossible "there appears a shift from military and governmental to civilian and economic targets, including water and transport infrastructure, food production and distribution, roads and transport, schools, cultural monuments, clinics and hospitals, and houses, fields, and flocks."<sup>9</sup> As a direct result, over 24 million people (80% of the population), now rely on humanitarian aid, and more than 13 million

---

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2016/08/yemen-conflict-controls-160814132104300.html>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/05/16/contrary-to-popular-belief-houthis-arent-iranian-proxies/?utm\\_term=.3c667913fde8](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/05/16/contrary-to-popular-belief-houthis-arent-iranian-proxies/?utm_term=.3c667913fde8)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/crisis-response0/assessing-the-impact-of-war-on-development-in-yemen.html>

<sup>8</sup> <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>

<sup>9</sup> <https://sites.tufts.edu/wpf/strategies-of-the-coalition-in-the-yemen-war/>

are at risk of starvation<sup>10</sup> - Yemen is on brink of world's worst famine in 100 years if war continues.<sup>11</sup>

(Update: the war continues despite the COVID-19 pandemic)<sup>12</sup>

“The war in Yemen has become a war on children”:<sup>13</sup> since 2015, the war has killed 140,000 children either directly (from violence) or indirectly (from malnutrition, disease and reduced family income). A child dies every 12 minutes in the country in 2019 because of the conflict; the UNDP report further predicted that by 2022 more than 331,000 children could be dead - accounting for 70 per cent of the total death toll if the war drags on with no end in sight. Yemen, a country of 30 million people, now has 17m people (nearly 60% of the population) living in extreme poverty; two thirds of these are now in extreme poverty because of the conflict. 3.3 million children are malnourished and over 400,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition. Save the Children estimates severe acute malnutrition caused the death of over 84,000 children under five during this war between April 2015 and October 2018.<sup>14</sup>

It can be argued that no war is moral but the Saudi Arabia-UAE's Yemen War especially so. Support from the France, UK and USA particularly has enabled the world's worst humanitarian crisis - there is no escaping to these two facts: this war is our war; and the dependence of the Saudi-led coalition on the UK and the USA to fight this war is so great that the war could have been stopped by the British and US governments terminating their support at any point since the start of the war in 2015.<sup>15</sup> The terrible human suffering and the exposure of a series of atrocities<sup>16</sup> including instances of possible war crimes committed by the Saudi and UAE forces<sup>17</sup> has made it impossible for our governments to whitewash the severity of the humanitarian disaster and deny their complicity.

*“I have to repeat sadly that obviously other criticism of Saudi Arabia in this Parliament is not helpful [for UK arms sales] and I'll leave it there. We need to do everything possible to encourage Saudi Arabia towards batch two and I believe they will commit toward batch two and we continue to work away on the timing.”<sup>18</sup> Michael Fallon, UK Defence Secretary (2014-2017), 25/10/2017*

*“The human cost of war in Yemen is incalculable: With millions displaced, famine and disease rife, and years of bloodshed, the only solution is now a political decision to set aside arms and pursue peace.”<sup>19</sup> Jeremy Hunt, UK Foreign Secretary (2018-), 12/11/2018*

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.unocha.org/yemen>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/oct/15/yemen-on-brink-worst-famine-100-years-un>

<sup>12</sup> <https://novaramedia.com/2020/07/02/britains-covid-19-death-toll-goes-far-beyond-its-borders/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.arabstates.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/library/crisis-response0/assessing-the-impact-of-war-on-development-in-yemen-.html>

<sup>14</sup> “Yemen: 85,000 Children May Have Died from Starvation since Start of War,” Save the Children International, November 21, 2018, <https://www.savethechildren.net/article/yemen-85000-children-may-have-died-starvation-start-war>.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/03/britain-war-in-yemen>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/09/world/middleeast/yemen-airstrike-school-bus-children.html>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/28/world/middleeast/un-yemen-war-crimes.html>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/michael-fallon-saudi-arabia-defece-secretary-tory-arms-deals-conservative-parliament-criticism-a8019641.html>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/uk-calls-yemen-war-khashoggi-justice-181112013927406.html>

*“Our strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates allows us the opportunity to influence their leaders. Since becoming foreign secretary last July, I have paid two visits to both countries.*

*We could, of course, decide to condemn them instead. We could halt our military exports and sever the ties that British governments of all parties have carefully preserved for decades, as critics are urging. ...That would be morally bankrupt and the people of Yemen would be the biggest losers.* [italics added]<sup>20</sup> **Jeremy Hunt, UK Foreign Secretary (2018-), 26/03/2019**

This hypocrisy is becoming unbearable. The stalemate in Yemen may have embarrassed the war’s two main architects: the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, who initiated and oversaw the Yemen campaign, and the UAE’s de facto ruler, Abu Dhabi’s crown prince Mohammed bin Zayed, but as the war has dragged on, the two leaders have become ever more brutal, in the knowledge that little will be done by the US and British governments or their Western allies to bring a halt to the atrocities. In this war, words are cheap and actions are hard to come by.

## BLOOD ON OUR HANDS

*“I think that Western countries have to be very aware of the fact that if they’re enabling a country like Saudi Arabia to simply drop bombs on innocent people, then they’re not going to be able to claim clean hands.”<sup>21</sup> **Leon Panetta, Former US Defence Secretary***

*“It’s very disturbing that despite everything that has happened there, interest is declining while the situation is getting worse. The UK is involved but it is a blind spot. Somehow we need to make the public realise there will be blood on the administration’s hands.”<sup>22</sup> **Keith Vaz, chair of the UK all-party parliamentary group (APPG) on Yemen***

Saudi Arabia and the other five members of the Gulf Co-operation Council<sup>23</sup> (all of them, except Oman, had or have been members of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen) are collectively the world’s largest buyer of military equipment by a big margin. Most of their arms are supplied by the US, but both Britain and France make up substantial portions of the rest.<sup>24</sup> These three countries pretend they have done everything they can to relieve the humanitarian disaster unfolding in Yemen<sup>25</sup> while conveniently ignoring the uncomfortable fact of their arms export to the Saudi-led coalition, which is central to the creation of the disaster in the first place.

Despite acknowledging the scale and extent of the humanitarian disaster<sup>26</sup> and the unfolding reality that targeting the civilian population (a war crime) has been a core component of the Saudi-led coalition’s strategy in Yemen - i.e. excessive civilian suffering is not unintended

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/conflict-war-un-yemen-crisis-wont-be-solved-by-uk-arms-exports-halt/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.channel4.com/press/news/britains-hidden-war-channel-4-dispatches>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/yemen-war-saudi-arabia-bombing-british-uk-arms-exports-public-poll-keith-vaz-blood-hands-a8604521.html>

<sup>23</sup> Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v41/n09/tom-stevenson/what-are-we-there-for>

<sup>25</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/723344/DFID-Yemen-Profile-July-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/723344/DFID-Yemen-Profile-July-2018.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/11/uk-calls-yemen-war-khashoggi-justice-181112013927406.html>



collateral damage but the intended consequence of the successful implementation of the coalition's military campaign - British foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt claimed that it would be 'morally bankrupt' not to sell weapons to the Saudis.<sup>27</sup> Consider the consequent events, it appears that Mr Hunt not only speaks on behalf of Her Majesty's Government but also for governments in France<sup>28</sup> and the USA<sup>29</sup>.

Human rights organisations, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch and journalists have documented evidence of many instances of weapons and bombs supplied by USA<sup>30</sup>, UK<sup>31</sup> and France<sup>32</sup> being used in the Saudi-UAE Alliance's deliberate attack on civilians.

Britain's residual influence in Saudi Arabia meant that during the oil crises of the 1970s the kingdom secretly broke its own embargo to supply Britain. Saudi Arabia also continued to pump much of the massive surplus generated by oil sales into British financial institutions. It finances around a fifth of the UK current account deficit. A ten-person team in Whitehall, known as Project Falcon, manages the UAE's investments in Britain. During the financial crisis in 2008, Gordon Brown appealed to the Gulf to provide private bailouts for British banks. In a deal subject to a current Serious Fraud Office investigation, Barclays received £4.6 billion from Qatar and £3.5 billion from the UAE, helping it to avoid nationalisation. Qatar's investments in the UK are many and conspicuous: Harrods, the Shard, the London Stock Exchange, Heathrow Airport. Saudi Arabia and the UAE's portfolios of UK bonds and equities are exceeded only by their US investments.

Saudi Arabia and the other five members of the Gulf Co-operation Council are collectively the world's largest buyer of military equipment by a big margin. Most of their arms are supplied by the US, but both Britain and France make substantial contributions. In 2017, the US and Saudi Arabia signed the largest arms deal in history, estimated to be worth \$350 billion. Between 1985 and 2006 Britain signed a series of contracts (the Al Yamamah deal) worth tens of billions. Sales stepped up dramatically when the war in Yemen began: Britain sold Saudi Arabia arms worth £3.3 billion in 2015, compared to £107 million the year before. The deals are highly profitable for Western arms companies (Middle East governments account for around half of all British arms sales), but the charge that Western governments are in thrall to the arms companies is based on a misconception. Arms sales are useful principally as a way of bonding the Gulf monarchies to the Anglo-American military. Proprietary systems – from fighter jets to tanks and surveillance equipment – ensure lasting dependence, because training, maintenance and spare parts can be supplied only by the source country. Western governments are at least as keen on these deals as the arms industry, and much keener than the Gulf states themselves. While speaking publicly of the importance of fiscal responsibility, the US, Britain and France have competed with each other to bribe Gulf officials into signing unnecessary arms deals.

---

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.politico.eu/article/conflict-war-un-yemen-crisis-wont-be-solved-by-uk-arms-exports-halt/>

<sup>28</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2019/05/17/france-takes-unprecedented-action-against-reporters-who-published-secret-government-document/>

<sup>29</sup> <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/05/24/politics/trump-arms-sales-saudi-arabia-uae/index.html>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/09/02/yemen-coalition-bus-bombing-apparent-war-crime>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/exposed-british-made-bombs-used-civilian-targets-yemen>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20190415-french-made-tanks-and-howitzer-canons-used-in-yemeni-war/>

For the people of the region, the effects of a century of AngloArabia have been less satisfactory. Since the start of the war in Yemen in 2015 some 75,000 people have been killed, not counting those who have died of disease or starvation. In that time Britain has supplied arms worth nearly £5 billion to the Saudi coalition fighting the Yemeni Houthis. The British army has supplied and maintained aircraft throughout the campaign; British and American military personnel are stationed in the command rooms in Riyadh; British special forces have trained Saudi soldiers fighting inside Yemen; and Saudi pilots continue to be trained at RAF Valley on Anglesey. The US is even more deeply involved: the US air force has provided mid-air refuelling for Saudi and Emirati aircraft – at no cost, it emerged in November. Britain and the US have also funnelled weapons via the UAE to militias in Yemen. If the Western powers wished, they could stop the conflict overnight by ending their involvement. Instead the British government has committed to the Saudi position. As foreign secretary, Philip Hammond pledged that Britain would continue to ‘support the Saudis in every practical way short of engaging in combat’. This is not only complicity but direct participation in a war that is as much the West’s as it is Saudi Arabia’s.

Tom Stevenson, review of *AngloArabia: Why Gulf Wealth Matters to Britain* by David Wearing, London Review of Books<sup>33</sup>

## UK

*“I’ve stood in the funeral parlour where more than a 100 people were killed as a result of a bombing run by the Saudi Air Force. We’ve seen the attack on children wearing their sort of UN children’s backpacks lying dead beside the wreck of the bus. The position is absolutely appalling and of course Britain is complicit in this. I think, as things stand today, history will judge us as an appalling failure of British foreign policy.”<sup>34</sup> Andrew Mitchell MP, Former UK International Development Secretary*

A recent Channel 4 Dispatches programme ‘Britain’s Hidden War’ documented the extensive reliance of Royal Saudi Air Force on British technicians employed by BAE Systems, the UK’s biggest defence contractor to fly its fleet of Typhoon fighter jets, used extensively to carry out bombing raids in Yemen.<sup>35</sup> “With the amount of aircraft they’ve got and the operational demands, if we weren’t there in 7 to 14 days there wouldn’t be a jet in the sky,” explained a former BAE worker. Simply, we can stop the atrocity if we want to - the UK government have the upper hands to force the warring parties to the negotiating table by withdrawing material, diplomatic and symbolic support for the Saudi-UAE alliance. The failure to do so is the legacy of the long corrupt and close relation between the UK and Saudi Arabia and a clear example of the overriding influence of the defence industry on the UK government’s decision making.<sup>36</sup> After all, the UK is “the second largest exporter of defence product and services in the world, with exports of \$120bn between 2007 and 2016,” the Ministry of Defence boasted in its annual report (2017).<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v41/n09/tom-stevenson/what-are-we-there-for>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.channel4.com/press/news/britains-hidden-war-channel-4-dispatches>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.channel4.com/press/news/britains-hidden-war-channel-4-dispatches>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/britain-s-warfare-state/>

<sup>37</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/652915/UK\\_Defence\\_in\\_Numbers\\_2017\\_-\\_Update\\_17\\_Oct.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652915/UK_Defence_in_Numbers_2017_-_Update_17_Oct.pdf)

British governments have long viewed the arms industry as a key mechanism to boost the British economy. Brexit looks set to be the next stage – after the creation of DSO under Labour and the Thatcherite Revolution – in the arms industry's occupation of the British state.

The government claims it has a rigorous export licensing system for its arms exports. Britain has had a defined export licensing process to approve arms sales since 1997, when recommendations in the Scott Report into arms sales to Saddam Hussein were enacted.

Arms companies require licences from the DTI to sell “goods, technology, software or components designed or modified for military use” as well as “‘dual use’ goods, technology, software, documents or diagrams which meet certain technical standards and could be used for military or civilian purposes”.

But the export licensing system is shrouded in secrecy, with information very difficult to get. In the case of an information request made to the government about surveillance technology sold to Egypt by the UK, further requests were declined because it would “likely prejudice the commercial interests of any companies that may have applied for a licence,” and “would reveal details of the markets that companies are operating in and possibly details of commercial opportunities that are still available.” With this proviso many information requests are turned down.

British arms export 'controls' seem more about facilitating exports than restricting them. The licensing system still allows half of all UK's arms sales to go to the dictatorship of Saudi Arabia, currently undertaking a brutal bombing campaign in Yemen, using British-supplied warplanes and missiles. Since 2008, the UK has sold £10.8bn of weapons to the Saudis, by far the biggest market for UK companies. The British government has rejected repeated calls to halt arms sales to Riyadh. ...

Military industry in the UK is made up of close to 2,500 companies, generates £33.5bn in turnover and employs 128,000 people, according to the government. Yet even from this high base, the government is currently seeking, in effect, to further militarise the British economy and society. The 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review was the first time the UK officially recognised promoting prosperity as a national security task. Ministers have said that "Strategic exports are now a core activity for the Ministry of Defence so we are calling on companies to play their part in increasing defence export sales and attracting inward investment into the UK".

Matt Kennard & Mark Curtis, openDemocracy, 2018<sup>38</sup>

Since the Saudi-led coalition began its aerial campaign in Yemen in March 2015, the UK has licensed at least £4.7 billion worth of weapons sales to Saudi Arabia, according to the Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT).<sup>39</sup>

The Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) uses the Eurofighter Typhoon, the Tornado, and two variants of the F-15 with the majority being F-15s and Tornados currently.<sup>40</sup> Both Typhoons and

---

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/britain-s-warfare-state/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/09/uk-arms-sales-are-factor-in-humanitarian-crisis-in-yemen-court-hears>

Tornados are made by European consortium led by British defence contractor BAE Systems while F-15s are made by American defence contractor Boeing.

*“The objective is to get Typhoon in Saudi Arabia. We have £43 billion from Al-Yamamah over the past 20 years and there could be £40 billion more.”<sup>41</sup> Mike Turner, CEO of BAE Systems (2002-2008)*

The so-called al-Yamamah deal saw BAE Systems furnish the RSAF with a large fleet of Tornado fighter jets. Since its inception, the £43 billion deal aroused controversy over proven allegations of bribery and corruption.<sup>42</sup> Along with the large, and lucrative support contracts for Typhoon, Hawk and Tornado jets, the British company employs some 6,000 people in Saudi. The Saudis already operate 72 Typhoons from a first batch of jets ordered from BAE in 2007. The final jets from that order were delivered in 2017.<sup>43</sup> In 2018, Saudi Arabia signed a Memorandum of Intent with the UK government to purchase 48 more Typhoon fighter jets from BAE.<sup>44</sup>

## USA

Rand [Dafna Rand, a former deputy assistant secretary of state, who is now a vice president at Mercy Corps] testified that soon after the Saudis launched the war in 2015, and civilian casualties started to mount, the State Department sent a trainer to Riyadh to work with Saudi Defense Ministry officials. She said the trainer had worked with the US military’s Central Command to reduce civilian casualties in Afghanistan, and US officials had thought the Saudis could use similar techniques to reduce casualties in Yemen. “We approached this very technically behind closed doors, very quietly, sent our trainer in,” Rand said, adding that, after a cease-fire in 2016, US officials were hopeful that their efforts were paying off. But once the cease-fire collapsed in August 2016, the Saudi coalition attacked a series of civilian targets that caused mass casualties. At that point, Rand said, “it gave us pause to recalibrate the strategy, and wonder what had happened to our training.” The State Department continued to quietly send the trainer to Riyadh.

But Rand and other officials soon realized that top Saudi leaders were not interested in limiting civilian casualties, despite American appeals. She said Saudi leaders only cared if the president—first Obama and later Trump—applied pressure or threatened to suspend weapons sales. Rand did not mention Mohammed bin Salman, who was then the deputy crown prince and Saudi defense minister and a major architect of the Yemen war. “We came to the conclusion by late 2016 that although there were very many well-meaning and professional generals in the Saudi Ministry of Defense, there was a lack of political will at the top senior levels to reduce the number of civilian casualties,” she said.

Representative Tom Malinowski, a Democrat from New Jersey who had served as assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights, and labor during the Obama administration, asked Rand if the problem was “imprecise targeting, or were they targeting the wrong things?”

<sup>40</sup> <https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/raf-maintaining-saudi-aircraft-being-used-against-yemen-minister-reveals/>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bae-cashes-in-on-pound40bn-arab-jet-deal-jkffkhpkk>

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opendemocracyuk/what-we-ve-learned-from-fifty-years-of-saudi-arms-deals/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.defensenews.com/global/europe/2018/03/09/saudi-arabia-pens-deal-with-uk-to-buy-48-typhoons/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://thedefensepost.com/2018/03/09/saudi-arabia-uk-eurofighter-typhoon-jets-moi/>

Rand responded, “It was very clear that precision was not the issue, and that guiding was not the issue. It was the type of target selection that became the clear issue, and even when the US government told them which targets not to hit, we saw instances where the coalition was targeting the wrong thing.” ...

But the Saudis and their allies attacked sites that were on various no-strike lists, which has grown to include thousands of locations compiled by the UN and humanitarian groups. In August 2016, for example, the Saudi coalition bombed the main bridge on the 155-mile road from Hodeidah port, along the Red Sea coast, to the capital, Sanaa. That road was the main artery for humanitarian groups to bring aid into Yemen, especially territory controlled by the Houthi militia. “They struck that [bridge] despite us having specifically told them through that process not to,” Konyndyk [Jeremy Konyndyk, former director of the USAID Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance] said.

Mohamad Bazzi, *The Nation*<sup>45</sup>

During the 8 years of Barack Obama’s presidency of the United States, the US government offered Saudi Arabia prospective deals worth more than \$115bn (£86bn pounds; some of these may not result in actual contracts) in weapons, other military equipment and training, the most in the 71-year US-Saudi alliance.<sup>46</sup> This includes a record-breaking \$60bn deal, the biggest arms deal in US history, to sell 84 bespoke Boeing F-15SA fighter jets for the Saudis.<sup>47</sup> The flow of arms into Saudi Arabia has seen no sign of slowing down since Donald Trump took office; in fact, the opposite may be true.<sup>48</sup>

Specifically, the US government in the past decade has approved arms sales to Saudi Arabia worth at least \$30.1 billion from four of the largest arms manufacturers alone, namely Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon and General Dynamics. The war in Yemen has been particularly lucrative for General Dynamics, Boeing and Raytheon; since the war began in March 2015, General Dynamics’ stock price has risen from about \$135 to \$169 per share, Raytheon’s from about \$108 to more than \$180, and Boeing’s from about \$150 to \$360. It is not hard to see why by looking at how many weapons, parts and services has been sold to Saudi Arabia in the last few years for the Yemen War: \$21bn to Boeing for 84 fighter jets, 82 Apache helicopters and 6,000 guided missile kits with additional \$1.2bn in maintenance and support. \$7bn to Lockheed Martin for 4 warships, 165 targeting systems for warplanes and 5,446 Hellfire missiles with additional \$1.36bn in maintenance and support. \$1.8bn to Raytheon for 11,357 anti-tank missiles and 15,575 guided bombs with \$37mn in maintenance and support. \$124mn to General Dynamics for 467 tanks.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.thenation.com/article/war-crimes-united-states-saudi-arabia-yemen/>

<sup>46</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-usa-saudi-security/obama-administration-arms-sales-offers-to-saudi-top-115-billion-report-idUKKCN11D2JC>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/saudi-defence-aerospace/saudi-arabia-receives-first-f-15sa-fighter-of-record-setting-weapons-order-idUSL5N1FF6H4>

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2018/oct/12/trump-khashoggi-case-will-not-stop-110bn-us-saudi-arms-trade-video>; [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/30/yes-trump-can-override-congress-sell-weapons-saudi-arabia-even-over-republican-objections/?utm\\_term=.954a5e502965](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/05/30/yes-trump-can-override-congress-sell-weapons-saudi-arabia-even-over-republican-objections/?utm_term=.954a5e502965)

<sup>49</sup> <http://inthesetimes.com/features/us-saudi-arabia-yemen-war-arms-sales.html>



According to Security Assistance Monitor, the USA has sold at least \$68bn worth of firearms, bombs, weapons systems and military training to both Saudi Arabia and the UAE since the start of their war in Yemen.<sup>50</sup> As Bruce Riedel of the Brookings Institution has pointed out, the US-UK supplied systems are the backbone of the Saudi military, and without those weapons and related maintenance and support they could not sustain their war in Yemen.

*“If the United States of America and the United Kingdom, tonight, told King Salman, ‘This war has to end,’ it would end tomorrow. Because the Royal Saudi Air Force cannot operate without American & British support.”<sup>51</sup> Bruce Riedel, 30-year veteran of the CIA and a former adviser on Middle East policy to four U.S. presidents*

One popular argument against stopping the flow of arms to Saudi Arabia and the UAE is “if we don’t do it, somebody else will.” But this is not necessarily the case as William Hartung of the Centre for International Policy argues: “the United States and its European allies supply the Saudi air force and the majority of the arsenals of both Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The Saudi and UAE militaries could not turn on a dime and seek Russian or Chinese systems to substitute for any cut-off of U.S. weaponry and support. It would take a decade or more for these nations to end their dependence on U.S. arms. A few deals with Moscow or Beijing would have limited impact on Saudi and UAE military capabilities, if Russia and China were even willing to supply arms to two nations that are responsible for the world’s worst humanitarian catastrophe, with the international opprobrium that would accompany any decision to do so.”<sup>52</sup>

Over the past decade, Saudi Arabia has ordered U.S.-made offensive weapons, surveillance equipment, transportation, parts and training valued at \$109.3 billion, according to an *In These Times* analysis of Pentagon announcements, contracts announced on defense industry websites and arms transfers documented by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. That arsenal is now being deployed against Yemen.

Saudi Arabia’s precision-guided munitions are responsible for the vast majority of deaths documented by human rights groups. *In These Times* found that, since 2009, Saudi Arabia has ordered more than 27,000 missiles worth at least \$1.8 billion from Raytheon alone, plus 6,000 guided bombs from Boeing (worth about \$332 million) and 1,300 cluster munitions from Rhode Island-based Textron (worth about \$641 million).

About \$650 million of those Raytheon orders and an estimated \$103 million of the Boeing orders came after the Saudi war in Yemen began.

Without these ongoing American-origin weapons transfers, the Saudi coalition’s ability to prosecute its war would wither. “We can stop providing munitions, and they could run out of munitions, and then it would be impossible to keep the war going,” says Jonathan Caverley, associate professor at the U.S. Naval War College and a research scientist at M.I.T.

The warplanes the United States delivers also need steady upkeep. Since the war began, the Saudis have struck deals worth \$5.5 billion with war contractors for weapons maintenance, support and training.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/revealed-full-extent-us-arms-deals-saudi-arabia-and-uae>

<sup>51</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2018/09/13/meet-the-senator-trying-to-end-u-s-support-for-the-war-in-yemen/>

<sup>52</sup> <https://lobelog.com/its-time-to-stop-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia/>

“The Saudi military has a very sophisticated, high-tech, capital-intensive military that requires almost constant customer service,” Caverley says. “And so most of the planes would be grounded if Lockheed Martin or Boeing turn off the help line.”

Rep. Jim McGovern (D-Mass.) wants to go even further. In January, he introduced legislation that would ban all weapons exports to Saudi Arabia, as well as maintenance and logistical support. The bill has 29 cosponsors (most of them Democrats).

“The bottom line is: We know for a fact that they’re bombing school buses, bombing weddings, bombing funerals, and innocent people are being murdered,” McGovern told *In These Times*. “The question now is: Are we going to just issue a press release and say, ‘We’re horrified,’ or is there going to be a consequence?”

Alex Kane, *In These Times*<sup>53</sup>

## FRANCE

... a highly classified document produced by the French Directorate of Military Intelligence shows that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are overwhelmingly dependent on Western-produced weapon systems to wage their devastating war in Yemen. Many of the systems listed are only compatible with munitions, spare parts, and communications systems produced in NATO countries, meaning that the Saudis and UAE would have to replace large portions of their arsenals to continue with Russian or Chinese weapons.

“You can’t just swap out the missiles that are used in U.S. planes for suddenly using Chinese and Russian missiles,” said Rachel Stohl, managing director of the Conventional Defense Program at the Stimson Center in Washington, D.C. “It takes decades to build your air force. It’s not something you do in one fell swoop.”

The Saudi-led bombing campaign in North Yemen primarily relies on three types of aircraft: American F-15s, British EF-2000 Typhoons, and European Tornado fighters. The Saudis fly American Apache and Black Hawk helicopters into Yemen from military bases in Saudi Arabia, as well as the French AS-532 Cougar. They have lined the Saudi-Yemen border with American Abrams and French AMX 30 tanks, reinforced by at least five types of Western-made artillery guns. And the coalition blockade, which is aimed at cutting off aid to the Houthi rebels but has also interfered with humanitarian aid shipments, relies on U.S., French, and German models of attack ships with, as well as two types of French naval helicopters.

Alex Emmons, *The Intercept*<sup>54</sup>

France’s total arms sales amounts to €9bn in 2018, including €1bn worth of arms to Saudi Arabia alone. Despite the government publicly and repeatedly calling for the ‘dirty war’ in Yemen to stop,<sup>55</sup> France’s arms sales to Saudi Arabia increased by 50%.<sup>56</sup> According to the

<sup>53</sup> <http://inthesetimes.com/features/us-saudi-arabia-yemen-war-arms-sales.html>

<sup>54</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2019/04/15/saudi-weapons-yemen-us-france/>

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/20181030-yemen-war-must-stop-french-defence-minister-says;>  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-france/french-minister-le-drian-urges-saudi-and-uae-to-end-war-in-yemen-idUSKCN1SY0JD>

French Ministry of Defence, France is the world's third-biggest arms exporter, its arms sales increased fourfold under François Hollande. Between 2008 and 2017, Saudi Arabia and the UAE were, respectively, its second and sixth biggest export markets.<sup>57</sup>

Recently leaked documents prepared by France's DRM military intelligence agency for French President Emmanuel Macron suggests that the assistance provided by the US, the UK and France to the Saudi-UAE alliance for their war in Yemen may go beyond what has previously been acknowledged.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, it also showed that arms export contracts were signed as recently as December 2018, in stark contrast to the French government's claim that arms being sold to Saudi Arabia are pursuant to old contracts.<sup>59</sup>

*"This military situation is an effective dead-end so this war must stop. That's a priority... To my knowledge, the weapons we have sold recently have not been used against civilians... We don't sell weapons like they're baguettes"*<sup>60</sup> **Florence Parly, French defence minister, October 2018**

*"To my knowledge, French weapons are not being used in any offensive in the war in Yemen. I do not have any evidence that would lead me to believe that French arms are behind the origins of civilian victims in Yemen."*<sup>61</sup> **Florence Parly, French defence minister, April 2019**

This is contradicted by the intelligence shown in the leaked documents: French-made tanks and howitzer cannons were used by the Saudi-UAE alliance against civilians.<sup>62</sup> Warship made by France were also used by the alliance to enforce the blockade of Yemen, where 90% of its food are imported.<sup>63</sup>

## DON'T BUY DON'T SELL

The work of NGOs, journalists and pressure from civil society to ceaselessly expose the atrocities committed in Yemen, has meant the 'business as usual' approach by those in the Saudi-led coalition is being challenged ever more rigorously. And the deeper the West's involvement in the atrocities in Yemen, the stronger the Saudi-led coalition governments (UK, USA and France) push back.

## THE WORLD'S BUYERS AND SELLERS

Data for the charts is from SIPRI.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-france-defence-arms/french-weapons-sales-to-saudi-jumped-50-percent-last-year-idUKKCN1T51C3>

<sup>57</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/20190420-france-arms-exports-yemen-saudi-uae-khashoggi-disclose>

<sup>58</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2019/04/15/saudi-weapons-yemen-us-france/>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/05/17/france-should-stop-fueling-saudi-war-crimes-yemen>

<sup>60</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/20181030-yemen-war-must-stop-french-defence-minister-says>

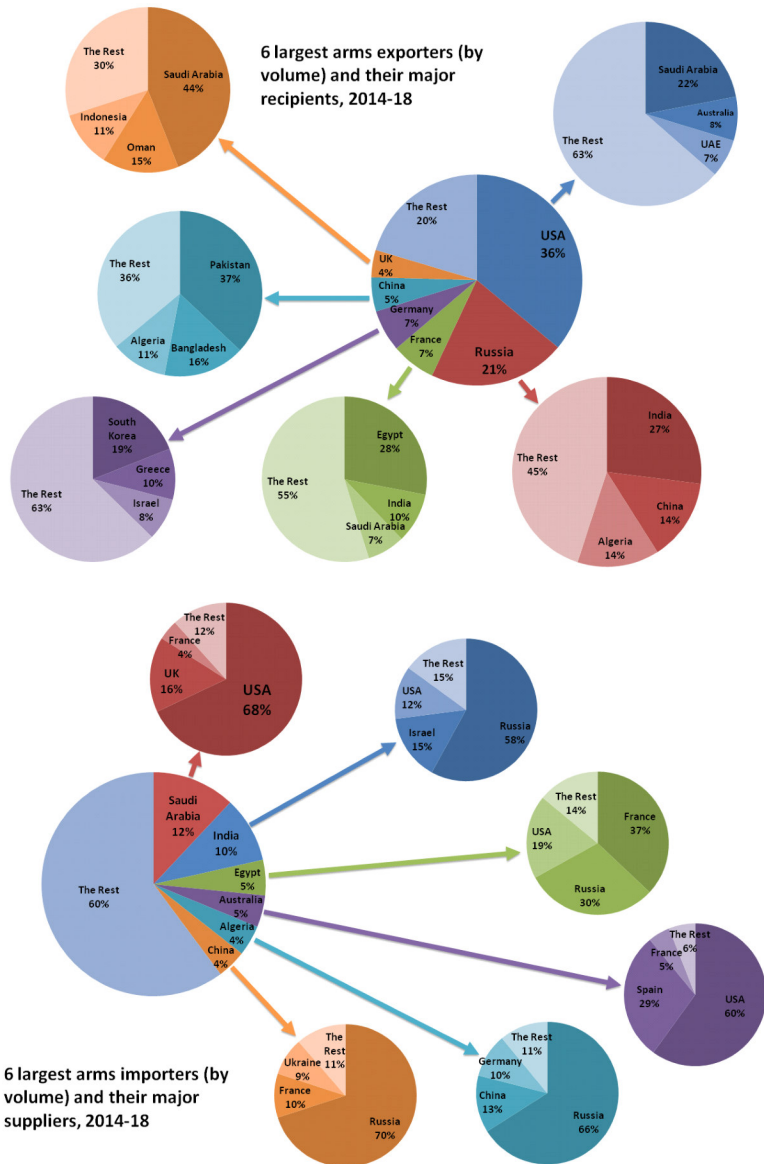
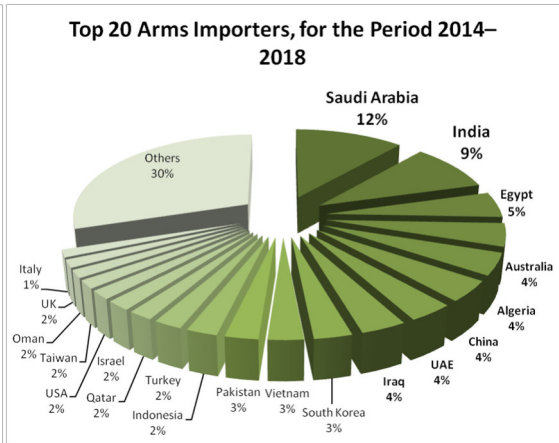
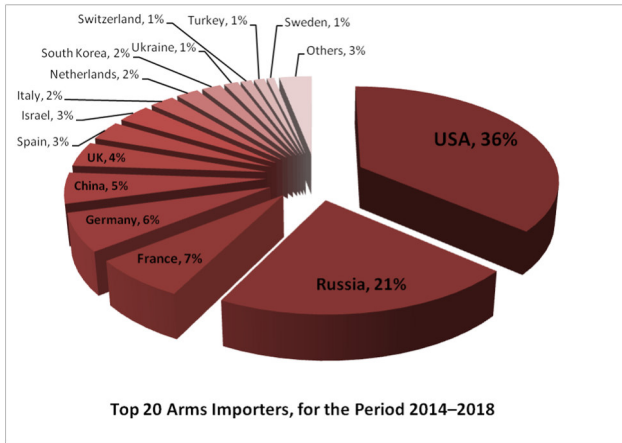
<sup>61</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-france-arms/french-weapons-not-used-against-civilians-in-yemen-minister-idUSKCN1RU0H0>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-france-arms/french-made-tanks-and-howitzer-cannons-used-in-yemeni-war-disclose-idUSKCN1RR1D3>

<sup>63</sup> <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/bn-missiles-food-security-yemen-201217-en.pdf>

<sup>64</sup> [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/fs\\_1903\\_at\\_2018.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2019-03/fs_1903_at_2018.pdf)





**THE CONCEPT: DON'T BUY DON'T SELL**

But we can make this pressure ever more effective, through the campaign concept ‘don’t buy, don’t sell.’ It is a solidarity country-twinning campaign concept between civil society activists from arms sales nations and arms buying nations working together.

One of the strengths of Don’t Buy Don’t Sell is it is international. If a Don’t Buy campaign is not practically possible in a country, an international coalition of Don’t Sell campaign can still be formed in solidarity.

#### EXAMPLE:

#### (DON’T BUY) SAUDI ARABIA & (DON’T SELL) UK, FRANCE, USA & GERMANY

Many of the biggest arms importers are also those most likely to misuse their arms - they also tend to be countries that either rank low in the Human Development Index or having an authoritarian tendency. In these countries, such authoritarian pressure makes civil society opposition extremely difficult. Saudi Arabia is one example - a country which regularly jails or even beheads their civil rights campaigners.<sup>65</sup> It is unrealistic to expect anyone in a country like Saudi Arabia to pressure the authority to stop the arms imports. It is left to those of with the freedom to act and who also live in those developed countries that are among the biggest arms exporters to tell our governments ‘Stop. We do not want blood on our hands’ when it is clear that UK made arms are being used by morally questionable regimes for aggressive and offensive attacks, not for defensive purposes.

It is also in this spirit that it becomes apparent why it is important that civil society in the ‘not much to lose’ camp have to campaign as hard as the ones in the ‘too much to lose’ camp. The ‘too much to lose’ governments will employ whatever means they can to prevent and minimise pressure from their concerned citizens to stop them carry on business as usual. On the other hand, the ‘not much to lose’ governments will always have other time-consuming priorities enabling civil society campaigning to really count. It is vital that civil society in the ‘not much to lose’ countries should realise ‘not much to lose’ **does not mean** ‘nothing to do with us’; in contrast to the ‘too much to lose’ governments, their own governments can be an effective arm of campaigning efforts to exert the collective wishes on the other governments.

---

#### GERMANY IS A GOOD EXAMPLE, CONCERNING SAUDI ARMS TRADE.

Compared to UK and France, Germany has historically relatively much smaller arms exports to Saudi Arabia. But this did not stop civil society pressuring the German government to impose an embargo on arms exports to Saudi Arabia. Even though the embargo was only concerned with the German arms trade, because of the nature of European defence industry, this creates significant problems for nominally British and French arms exporters such as BAE Systems<sup>66</sup> and Airbus<sup>67</sup>. Most production is now multinational; for example, the production of a BAE Systems’ Eurofighter Typhoon fighter jet involves UK, Germany, Italy and Spain - one thirds of the components come from Germany. The embargo may jeopardise Saudi’s order of 48 new

---

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/saudi-arabia>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/a0c7b5fa-329c-11e9-bd3a-8b2a211d90d5>

<sup>67</sup> [https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/airbus-considers-legal-action-against-germany-s-ban-on-saudi-arms-sales-119050500743\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/airbus-considers-legal-action-against-germany-s-ban-on-saudi-arms-sales-119050500743_1.html)

Typhoons; a memorandum of understanding was signed in March 2018 but the deal has not been finalised since.<sup>68</sup>

The sensitive issue has put France at odds with its key partner Germany, which imposed an embargo on arms exports to Riyadh in the wake of Khashoggi's murder. The move sparked stinging criticism from Paris and London, with Macron accusing the German government of "demagoguery".

In an unusually strong-worded op-ed published on the website of Germany's Federal Academy for Security Studies, Anne-Marie Descôtes, the French ambassador to Berlin, warned that the "unpredictability of German policy on arms export controls" carried "major consequences for [Franco-German] defence cooperation and the construction of European sovereignty".

Preserving sovereignty through an independent arms industry has long been a cornerstone of French defence policy, an imperative that often overrides ethical concerns about the way French arms are used.

"The trouble is France's army is too small for the amount of weapons produced," said Élie Tenenbaum, a research fellow at the IFRI Security Studies Centre in Paris, in an interview with FRANCE 24. "To remain profitable, French firms have to focus on exports. They would rather export to Europe, but the market is dominated by US competitors. So they have to turn to the Middle-East."

Some critics of Germany's decision to halt exports have argued that Berlin had less to lose than France, but SIPRI's Wezeman rejects the argument.

"Germany would have profited considerably from arms deals with Saudi Arabia, which was very interested in German arms, particularly German tanks. The stakes were just as important," he said, suggesting Berlin's policy change reflected a cultural difference.

"In Germany and in several Nordic countries there is traditionally much stronger political pressure to be more careful with arms exports," Wezeman added.

French lawmaker Nadot believes that instead of admonishing the German government, France would be better advised to follow the example set by its European partner, particularly at a time when US President Donald Trump's administration is undermining the rules-based international order.

What's more, Nadot notes that France is sapping the spirit of the ATT treaty it once championed.

When the treaty came into force in 2014, "France was rightly proud of the fact that 60 countries had ratified it, with more to follow," he said. "And yet, we are now trampling on its principles."

Benjamin Dodman, France 24<sup>69</sup>

---

## CAMPAIGNING IN THE UK

<sup>68</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-saudi-khashoggi-germany-analysis/german-halt-to-saudi-arms-sales-could-put-squeeze-on-eurofighter-idUKKCN1MX2VI>

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.france24.com/en/20190420-france-arms-exports-yemen-saudi-uae-khashoggi-disclose>

In the UK, the Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT) is leading the struggle to stop British arms sales to Saudi Arabia, bringing high-profile court cases against the government for 'unlawful' granting of export licences, alongside other NGOs including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Rights Watch UK and Oxfam.<sup>70</sup> The failure of British parliament's 'broken select committee system' to properly and meaningfully scrutinise British involvement in the Yemen War promoted a group of MPs, arms sales experts and former military officers to form its own citizens committee on arms sales (CCAS). The importance of this CCAS and other similar initiatives arise from the recognition, even by the civil servants, that if the Conservative government loses the power to the Labour government in the next election, a sharp shift in British policy to the Saudis is inevitable. "UK Middle East policy will be turned upside down. It would be remiss if we, as civil servants, were not planning for it now."<sup>71</sup>

---

#### SAUDI & NORWAY, FINLAND, DENMARK AND NETHERLANDS

After months of campaigning by NGOs and Norwegian MPs, Norway suspended arms sales to the UAE in early 2018.<sup>72</sup> While Norway has never allowed sale of arms or ammunition to Saudi Arabia, they also froze all (dual-use) defence material export licences to the Saudis in the late 2018.<sup>73</sup> Around the same time, Finland and the Netherlands stopped arms sales to Saudi Arabia because of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen while both Denmark and Germany also halted the arms sales after the brutal killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi by the Saudi regime.<sup>74</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Compared to other conflicts, the media's attention to the Yemen War has been fleeting so it has often been called 'the forgotten war' to draw the public's attention.<sup>75</sup> This ignorance suits the politicians in power and all those with vested interests. However, after many years of campaigning by civil society, the majority of the public are against the continuing of arms sales to the Saudi-UAE alliance; 75% of French people want the suspension of arms exports to Saudi Arabia and UAE<sup>76</sup> while 63% of Britons, including a majority of Conservative voters (52%) oppose the sale of weapons to the Saudis.<sup>77</sup> The US, British and French government are still allowing the sale of weapons and military services to the Saudi-UAE alliance, but over time, the

---

<sup>70</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/09/uk-arms-sales-are-factor-in-humanitarian-crisis-in-yemen-court-hears>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/may/21/citizens-committee-puts-saudi-arms-sales-under-scrutiny>

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-norway-emirates/norway-suspends-arms-sales-to-uae-over-yemen-war-idUSKBN1ES0HG>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.thelocal.no/20181110/norway-halts-arms-exports-to-saudi-arabia-over-yemen>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.euronews.com/2019/04/02/jamal-khashoggi-eu-divided-over-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia-six-months-after-murder>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/yemen-civil-war-explained-facts-saudi-arabia-bombing-uk-forgotten-war-deaths-refugees-a8584356.html>;  
<https://www.spiegel.de/international/world/a-close-up-look-at-the-forgotten-war-in-yemen-a-1228775.html>

<sup>76</sup> <https://www.firstpost.com/world/75-french-people-want-emmanuel-macron-to-suspend-arms-exports-to-countries-involved-in-saudi-arabia-led-yemen-war-shows-poll-4405401.html>

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/yemen-civil-war-uk-saudi-arabia-arms-sales-bombing-emergency-debate-stephen-twigg-a8532191.html>

solidarity among civil societies around the world will win and stop the atrocity – together we are strong.

This is precisely the time for peace movement, international development groups, human rights and environmental movements to put centre-stage calls for a framework for cuts to military spending centre stage (see Five Percent Formula)<sup>78</sup> along with an international civil society call *Don't Buy Don't Sell* – led by those of us in the arms-selling global north.

---

<sup>78</sup> <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/the-five-percent-campaign/the-5-formula-what-is-it/>

The  
**5%**  
Campaign

 @\_5percent

 facebook.com/thefivepercentcampaign/

 thefivepercentcampaign.org

 tippingpointnorthsouth.org