

German government increases arms deliveries to Israel tenfold

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Germany's complicity with Israel in the genocide against the Palestinians is not limited to expressions of solidarity with the right-wing Netanyahu government. The German government is playing a central role in arming and equipping the Israeli war machine, which has destroyed large parts of the Gaza Strip in the past four weeks and killed more than 10,000 people—including thousands of women and children. Now it is expanding the bloodbath and receiving more and more German weapons in return.

According to a report by the German Press Agency (dpa) on Wednesday, which refers to information from the Ministry of Economics, the German government has massively expanded its licences for arms exports to Israel. By November 2, it had approved exports amounting to almost €303 million—almost 10 times the amount of the entire year 2022, with around €32 million.

The majority, 185 of the 218 individual licences issued so far this year, have been issued and finalised since the start of the Israeli massacre in Gaza. Dpa quotes a representative of the ministry led by Robert Habeck (Greens) as saying, “Due to the current situation,” the German government is “prioritising applications for the export of military equipment to Israel.”

The specific deliveries are secret, but what is known makes it clear that they involve lethal war equipment. On October 12, the Defence Ministry announced that the government had approved a corresponding Israeli “support request” for combat drones. The drones in question are Israeli-made Heron TP drones, which Germany had leased from Israel to develop its own combat drone programme. According to Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (Social Democratic Party—SPD), Israel also asked for ammunition for warships, protective waistcoats, components for air defence and communications equipment, among other things.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

(SIPRI) also reports that Germany has supplied more than 1,000 tank engines to Israel in recent years. The basis for this is an export licence from the year 2000, and the engines were probably installed in the Israeli Merkava-4 main battle tank and Namer armoured personnel carriers. Diesel engines were also supplied for the Israeli Eitan wheeled armoured personnel carrier.

In addition, nuclear-capable Dolphin-class submarines and Sa'ar-class corvettes were delivered for the Israeli navy. According to SIPRI, there is close military-industrial cooperation between German defence giants such as Rheinmetall, MBDA Deutschland and Krauss-Maffei Wegmann and Israel—including in the development of missiles and other ammunition.

Speaking to the European television channel Euronews, SIPRI researcher Zain Hussain suggested that German war equipment is playing a central role in the current massacre in Gaza. “According to our estimates, some of these engines are probably ready for use in Gaza,” said Hussain. “Some of the German ships have also been put into operation” and are “probably being used to fire at targets in the Gaza Strip.”

There is no doubt that the German government is directly participating in genocide with the arms deliveries and is complicit in the most serious war crimes.

In his resignation letter of October 28, the head of the New York office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Craig Mokhiber, described the horrific events in the Gaza Strip as “textbook genocide.” As a human rights defender with more than three decades of experience, he is well aware that the term genocide has often been misused politically. He said:

But the current wholesale slaughter of the Palestinian people, rooted in an ethno-nationalist settler colonial ideology, in continuation of

decades of their systematic persecution and purging, based entirely upon their status as Arabs, and coupled with explicit statements of intent by leaders in the Israeli government and military, leaves no room for doubt or debate.

In the Gaza Strip, “civilian homes, schools, churches, mosques, and medical institutions are wantonly attacked as thousands of civilians are massacred,” Mokhiber continued. And in the West Bank, including occupied Jerusalem, houses are being “seized and reassigned based entirely on race, and violent settler pogroms (are being) accompanied by Israeli military units.” Apartheid reigns throughout the country, he wrote.

Mokhiber also did not mince words with regard to the complicity of the imperialist powers in the “expedited destruction of the last remnants of indigenous Palestinian life in Palestine.” The governments of “the United States, the United Kingdom, and much of Europe” are “wholly complicit in the horrific assault,” he added.

They refused to honour their treaty obligations, he wrote, such as compliance with the Geneva Convention. But it goes even further:

But they are in fact actively arming the assault, providing economic and intelligence support, and giving political and diplomatic cover for Israel’s atrocities. In concert with this, western corporate media, increasingly captured and state-adjacent, are in open breach of Article 20 of the ICCPR, continuously dehumanizing Palestinians to facilitate the genocide, and broadcasting propaganda for war and advocacy of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility, and violence.

This smear campaign is particularly aggressive in Germany. Eight decades after the Nazi reign of terror and the worst crimes in human history, establishment politicians and the media are once again fuelling a pogrom-like atmosphere in order to boost armaments, justify genocidal violence and suppress the growing resistance to it. The height of criminality is that this essentially fascist policy is being pursued in the name of the fight against antisemitism.

In fact, the ruling class—which is once again building a fascist party in the form of the Alternative for Germany (AfD)—is not concerned with protecting Jewish life. In the Middle East, Berlin is pursuing geostrategic and economic interests by supporting Israel as an imperialist bridgehead in the region. And in Germany itself, the accusation of antisemitism serves to establish an authoritarian regime. All those who oppose Israel’s genocide against the Palestinians are denounced as “antisemites” and “terrorists”—even if they are Jewish themselves.

Significantly, the far-right Netanyahu government, for its part, supports the return of German militarism, which waged a war of extermination during the Second World War and committed the Holocaust against 6 million Jews. Shortly before the Israeli massacre in Gaza, Pistorius and his Israeli colleague Gallant signed an agreement to sell the Israeli missile defence system “Arrow 3” to Germany. With a value of over 4 billion euros, this is the largest defence deal in Israeli history.

For German imperialism, “Arrow 3” is a central component in establishing Germany as the strongest military power in Europe, making it again “fit for war” (Pistorius) and preparing it for a full-scale NATO war against the nuclear power Russia. When the Israeli armed forces successfully deployed Arrow 3 for the first time in the course of the genocide in Gaza, the German media cynically celebrated this as “good news” and a successful “endurance test.”

The genocidal war coalition between Berlin, Tel Aviv and the other leading NATO powers must be stopped and its leading protagonists—including Biden, Netanyahu, Gallant, Pistorius and Scholz—brought to justice before they commit even greater crimes and plunge the world into the abyss. This requires the extension of worldwide mass protests against the genocide, the blockade of arms shipments and the struggle for a political general strike of the international working class based on a socialist programme.



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