

# Report from the Campaign Against Arms Trade (UK) to the meeting of the European Network Against Arms Trade - June 2003

## Iraq

Much of CAAT's work in early 2003 was dominated by the war on Iraq. As well as dealing with press enquiries, some involving searching files fifteen or more years old, CAAT used the demonstrations and meetings against the war as an opportunity to recruit new supporters. A recruitment postcard was produced and given out widely, and the response was almost more than our administration and volunteers could handle. About 600 people returned the postcard asking for more information about Iraq.

## Fanning the Flames - how UK arms sales fuel conflict

CAAT's main popular campaign for 2003 is "Fanning the Flames - how UK arms sales fuel conflict". A pack for supporters has been produced, and is also available on the web. This campaign is being enthusiastically taken up around the country.

## Indonesia

Indonesia is using UK supplied equipment (Scorpion vehicles and Hawk aircraft) in its current offensive in Aceh. CAAT has joined TAPOL-the Indonesia Human Rights Campaign in protesting about this and calling on the UK government to stop the export of spares.

## Site Unseen

Chris, CAAT's Local Campaigns Co-ordinator, is 40 this year and he is celebrating this by visiting 40 BAE Systems sites. At each there is a protest during the day followed by a local meeting in the evening.

## New export control legislation

The Government consulted on the detailed, secondary, legislation under its new 2002 Export Control Act. The main issue, as predicted, was brokerage as the Government did not propose to introduce full extra-territorial controls on the activities of arms brokers. The results of the consultation are awaited.

## Political influence of the arms companies

CAAT is researching the political influence of the arms companies. A preliminary report is on the website, but it is hoped that responses from readers will allow a bigger report to be produced. There is particular concern about arms company influence within the European Union - a number of reports from committees made up of arms industry representatives call for more military spending. The new

European Convention also talks about building military capacity. CAAT would like ideas as to how this can be challenged.

## Export Credits

CAAT continues to be involved in the UK group of organisations (most environmental, some development) which is campaigning around the work of the Export Credits Guarantee Department.

Ann also attended a meeting of the international ECA Watch (Export Credit Agency) in London in December. As in Berlin, she was the only arms trade person there.

## Bribery

Some of the people, Ann included, involved in the ECGD and ECA Watch campaigns are now also working on bribery. Transparency International has said it believes the arms industry is the most corrupt. Certainly, there are allegations about BAE Systems with regard to South Africa, Qatar and the Czech Republic.

The UK government is currently consulting on new anti-bribery legislation and CAAT hopes to make a submission.

## Defence Systems & Equipment International

The UK's big military exhibition takes place from 9th to 12th September in London Docklands. There is a full programme of protest activities.

## Company AGMs

There was the usual protest at the BAE Systems Annual General Meeting in May. Ian, CAAT's Research Co-ordinator, went to other AGMs to ask questions and gather information.

## Clean Investment Campaign

In February CAAT produced its annual figures showing investments by public bodies in arms companies. This year information on trade unions was included.

## CAAT News

*CAAT News* continues to increase its reputation as a very readable and informative magazine. The design is also very popular.

## Website

CAAT's redesigned website went on-line at the beginning of February. It is attracting a large number of visits, always more than 7,000 a month and 15,000 in March, and is now considered a major campaigning tool.

There is also an email action list which is proving popular. Information about protests, suggestions of letters to write to MPs and other information goes out about every two weeks.



## New briefings

Since September 2002, CAAT has just published a briefing on Israel "Arming the Occupation" and "Nurturing Turkey's War Machine". Both of these are also on the CAAT website as is the new report "The Political Influence of Arms Companies." A new South Africa briefing is going to the printers this week.

## CAAT internal

CAAT currently has seven staff. They are:

Richard Bingley - press work and newsletter (full-time);

Chris Cole - looks after local campaigners around the country and the Christian Network (full-time);

Patrick Delaney - sales worker (3 days a week);

Ann Feltham - parliamentary and lobbying work, liaison with other organisations in the UK and internationally, administration (full-time);

Martin Hogbin - national events co-ordinator (3 days a week);

Joanna Lamprell - fundraiser (full-time);

Ian Prichard - research co-ordinator (full-time).

Unfortunately, and completely by coincidence, Richard, Chris and Joanna will all have left CAAT by the end of July. Plans are being made as to how to cope until their replacements are recruited, but CAAT is not likely to be able to take on any major new projects in the near future.

Luckily, as well as the staff, CAAT now has a Research Intern, Zack Moss. His post is funded for one year from 1st June 2003 by CAAT's associated charity, the Trust for Research and Education on the arms trade.

25.6.03