

# Report from the Campaign Against Arms Trade (UK) to the meeting of the European Network Against Arms Trade – June 2004

In the year since the last ENAAT meeting in June 2003, CAAT has been very short-staffed and, for several months, keeping the campaign running at a very basic level, including publishing CAATnews, was all that could be managed.

New staff started in April 2004 so the CAAT staff are now:

Kathryn Busby - fundraiser (full-time);

Beccie D'Cunha - local campaigns (3 days a week);

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);

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

Andrew Wood - press (3 days a week).

In addition, Emma Mayhew will be working on arms export subsidies (shared between CAAT and the British American Security Information Council) as a Quaker intern for a year from September.

## UK government

Luckily, since it might have been difficult to deal with them, there were few new initiatives by the UK government nor were any major new arms deals suggested during the past year. The 2002 Export Control Act finally came into force in May 2004, but it has been business as usual. The UK's Annual Report on strategic exports for 2003 is due on 7th June.

## Globalisation of industry

A number of UK arms companies are being sold off to overseas owners - Agusta Westland to Finmeccanica, Alvis to General Dynamics, BAE Systems ships is available for offers. On the other hand, EADS has set up EADS UK. CAAT is considering the impact of these changes on its work.

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

As there was no staff time to set up a new public campaign, the 2003 one, "Fanning the Flames - how UK arms sales fuel conflict", has continued.

## Indonesia

CAAT has been monitoring the use by Indonesia of UK supplied equipment (Scorpion vehicles and Hawk aircraft) in the 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. With TAPOL, CAAT tried legal action against the Government, but was unsuccessful. The judge said that we did not have enough information, but the Government would not give us the information the judge said was necessary.

## **Political influence of the arms companies**

Before she begins work as an Intern, Emma Mayhew is writing up the research that several CAAT volunteers have been doing on the political influence of the arms companies. It is hoped that the report will be ready in October to be promoted to parliamentarians and the press.

## **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. The parliamentary Trade and Industry Select Committee is currently holding an Inquiry into the ECGD and CAAT has given written and oral evidence.

## **Bribery**

*The Guardian* newspaper has had a series of articles on BAE Systems and corruption. As with *The Sunday Times*, someone has gone to the newspaper with a whole lot of evidence about the company's activities. CAAT has been working with the Cornerhouse Foundation (a research group) to press the authorities to investigate this.

CAAT has also had frequent contact with Transparency International about bribery and the arms trade. Ann is going to an international TI conference on this taking place in southern England from 8th to 10th June.

## **DSEi 2003**

The huge Government-sponsored DSEi 2003 arms fair took place in London Docklands in September 2003 and attracted lots of protests and publicity. It was noticeable that the organisers were stressing it was a trade fair and did played down any link to arms.

Work is already starting to stop the next planned DSEi, which is scheduled for September 2005.

## **Farnborough Airshow**

This airshow takes place in southern England from 19th to 25th July 2004, the weekdays are trade days while the weekend are flying displays for the public.

CAAT is organising a visual protest, aimed at getting press coverage, on the opening day and may also be doing something on a public day.

CAAT had a lot of telephone and email contact with French groups about the Eurosatory arms fair, but the groups were preoccupied with a peace festival taking place a few days earlier. The French Quakers were hoping to organise a small vigil, but CAAT decided there was not enough going on to spend lots of time and money taking a UK group to the protest.

## **Clean Investment Campaign**

CAAT produced its annual figures showing investments by public bodies in arms companies. This year CAAT is looking at pension funds controlled by Liberal Democrat Councils and planning a campaign to persuade them to disinvest from the arms trade.

## **European work**

Ann attended the meeting organised by Saferworld and the Irish government in Dublin in December. As with previous such meetings, the first day included government officials and the second was just for non-governmental organisations, most Amnesty and IANSA people. CAAT and SPAS were the ENAAT groups there.

CAAT joined with Campagne tegen Wapenhandel tried to organise a workshop at the Paris

European Social Forum. Unfortunately, the organisers changed the title without asking and, even worse, the room allocated for the workshop did not exist so it did not happen. The London organisers promise there will not be the same problems this year so ENAAT needs to decide if it will organise anything.

1.6.04