

Campaign Against Arms Trade Treaty Implementation

Even though the organisation has been working on arms trade issues since 1974, this is the first time Campaign Against Arms Trade has been represented at an ATT conference. As a newcomer, I find it rather strange, somewhat surreal, to have heard numerous statements from governments with, while I was present, no mention of Yemen. This is even though Yemen is being bombed by Saudi Arabia and other coalition members using weapons bought from overseas - many of these are weapons licensed by governments which say their exports are subject to rigorous controls.

CAAT is a UK organisation. The UK government was one of the leading states during the ATT negotiations. However, the UK government's support for the arms companies is a bigger priority for it. Despite many, many credible reports of International Humanitarian Law violations by Saudi Arabia, the UK government continues to licence exports where there is a clear risk they might be used in serious IHL violations. The UK government even accelerated the export of bombs. Unfortunately, the UK is not the only government doing this.

Those who campaigned for an ATT did not expect this. Even those of us who were more sceptical have been shocked. To stop the exports to Saudi Arabia from the UK, CAAT is now taking legal action. It is shameful we should have to do this to stop an ATT member government licensing exports which are helping to cause thousands of deaths and the complete devastation of homes and infrastructure.

We call on all states to immediately cease any exports which might be used in the conflict in Yemen.