

CJPME Condemns Canada's Record-breaking 2023 Military Exports to Israel

By [Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East](#)
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CJPME

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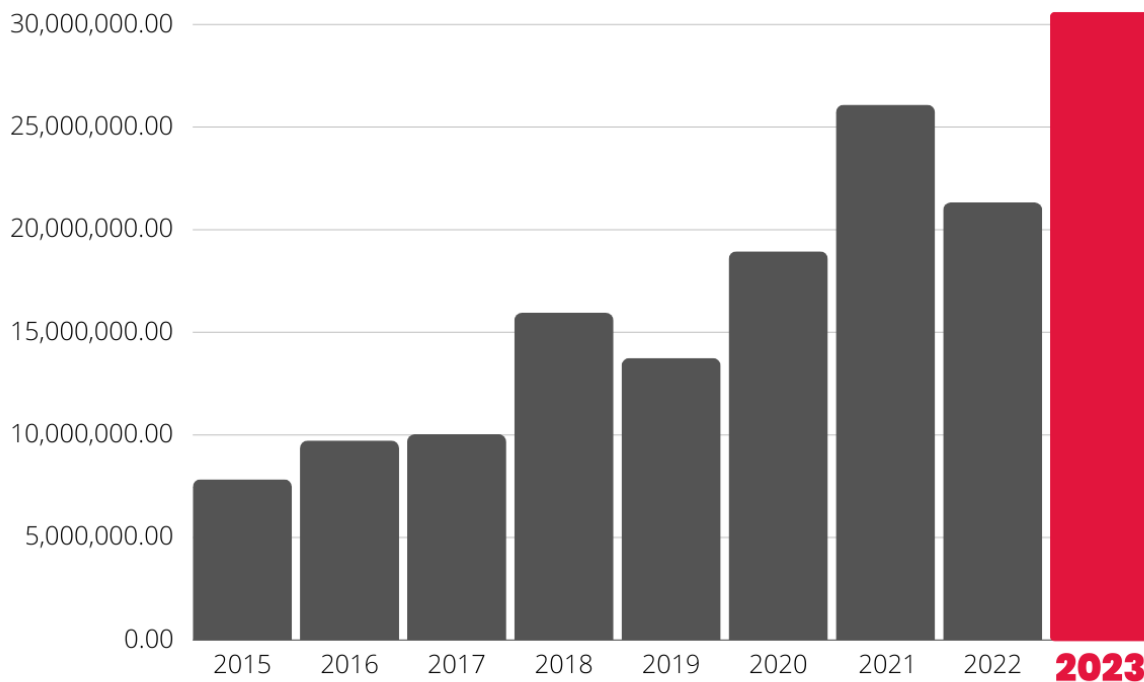
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Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is outraged to learn that Canada exported \$30,641,495.83 in military goods and technology to Israel in 2023, according to Canada's newly released [annual report on military exports](#). This is the highest year on record and represents a 43% increase in the value of military exports over the previous year. This is also during a period in which Israel stands accused of genocide against Palestinians by international legal experts. CJPME notes that the \$30.6M is a separate figure from the \$28.5M in export permits [approved](#) by Canada following October 7, 2023, many of which may not have been utilized yet. CJPME reiterates its call for Canada to reverse this dangerous trend, and immediately impose a [two-way arms embargo](#) on Israel using the Special Economic Measures Act.

"Canada exported more weapons to Israel last year than in any other year on record. There is every reason to believe that many of these weapons were used in Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza," said Michael Bueckert, Vice President of CJPME. "It's time for Canada to end its complicity in genocide and impose effective sanctions to halt military trade with Israel," Bueckert added.

Canadian Military Exports to Israel under the Trudeau Government (2015–2023)



Values are expressed in current Canadian dollars, not adjusted for inflation. Source: Global Affairs Canada.

Canada's [annual report](#) shows that Israel continues to be the top non-US destination in terms of the number of utilized export permits for military goods and technology, with 348 permits utilized in 2023. Similar to previous years, the top categories of military goods were categorized as explosives or related components (\$10,458,545) or related to military spacecraft (\$13,059,723) and military aircraft (\$4,368,437), while other important categories relate to vessels of war, ground vehicles, firearms and accessories. While the report claims that all military goods approved after October 7 were “non-lethal,” this is not a recognized technical distinction in the export regime, and this [misleading argument](#) obfuscates the role of components in larger lethal weapons systems. Canada did not deny any permits for military goods to Israel in 2023. Canada maintained trade prior to Oct 7 despite Israel's ongoing commission of war crimes through the settlement of the West Bank and discriminatory practices against Palestinians that amount to the crime of apartheid.

CJPME also notes that the government has finally made [initial disclosures](#) of minimal information related to military exports to Israel, as requested by Parliament's Foreign Affairs and International Development Committee (FAAE), but only for those permits approved after October 7 2023. CJPME notes that these disclosures do not provide significant new information; nonetheless, they indicate that most exports were destined for “an Israeli company that is part of defence supply chains,” and describe most of the military exports vaguely as “circuit boards” related to aircraft, land vehicles, targeting systems, radar, and more. While seemingly benign, circuit boards can be used to facilitate serious violations of humanitarian and human rights laws, and their transfer to Israel still likely breaches Canada's obligations as a signatory of the Arms Trade Treaty.

“The information disclosed so far is woefully incomplete, but it nonetheless underlines the risk that Canadian exports could very well be incorporated into weapons systems used by the Israeli military in Gaza. The Parliamentary committee must launch a full study into the Canada-Israel arms trade, so that we can find out exactly what weapons were sent to Israel, how they were used, and if Canada is violating international law,” added Bueckert.

CJPME continues to be concerned about significant loopholes in Canada’s export controls, including the potential for Canadian weapon components to be used in weapon systems and munitions delivered to Israel by the United States or other NATO allies. CJPME notes that the integrated nature of the NATO supply chain makes it impossible to verify compliance without a blanket two-way arms embargo and robust enforcement by Canadian agencies.

“On March 18, Parliament voted for an end to arms transfers to Israel. In exchange for amending the motion, the government promised the NDP that Global Affairs Canada would post a public notice to exporters to explain that no permits to Israel would be allowed. Months later, and Minister Joly still hasn’t posted the notice to exporters, and she continues to allow the transfer of military goods to Israel under existing permits. For all we know, Canadian arms could still be flowing to Israel amid a genocide. We cannot trust this government at face-value, nor can we put faith in Canada’s loophole-ridden export control system. This is why we need a two-way arms embargo,” concluded Bueckert.

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