

Dear Helena

Further to our meeting with you on 18 October, we indicated we would like you to ask an oral parliamentary question on behalf of Hastings Jews for Justice.

I set out below the question, with an explanatory preamble.

Proposed parliamentary question FOR ORAL ANSWER from the Right Hon. Helena Dollimore MP to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, on behalf of Hastings Jews for Justice

8 Nov 2024

On 2.9.24 the government announced the suspension of 30 of 350 arms export licences for sales to Israel. This included a ban on the export of parts for the F35 fighter jet when sold directly to Israel; but no ban on the continued sale of the same parts into the global F35 supply chain, despite the risk that Israel may become the end-user thereof.

It has been alleged by the Global Legal Action Network (GLAN) and the Palestinian human rights organisation Al Haq that, in considering whether or not to continue issuing export licences for the sale of arms and military equipment to Israel, the Department of Business and Trade has limited its assessment of possible violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) by Israel to looking at restrictions on food and medical supplies, and concerns around credible claims of the mistreatment of detainees, but has failed to make an assessment of the legality of airstrikes.

In other words, there has been no assessment of whether there is a clear risk that the F35 fighter jet, of which UK-supplied parts constitute 15%, may be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of IHL (the test set out in the Arms Trade Treaty 2013 (ATT) Articles 6 and 7 and the UK's Strategic Export Licensing Criteria, criteria 1 and 2).

While Israel's refusal to allow the international press into Gaza may make it harder to obtain precise information about which aircraft are used for which bombing raids, this cannot absolve the UK government from the duty to assess whether there is a clear risk of F35s being used for serious violations of IHL. There have been a number of well-documented bombing attacks resulting in a high number of civilian deaths, in which it is known that the F35 was used, such as the attack on a 'safe zone' in Al Mawasi on 13 July 2024 which resulted in 90 civilian deaths and 300 casualties. [source: NGO Danwatch]

### **Question**

**Will the Department of Business and Trade commit to carrying out the assessment of airstrikes as a matter of urgency, with a view to giving further consideration to whether the sale into the global supply chain of UK-made F35 parts for which Israel may become the end-user can continue?**