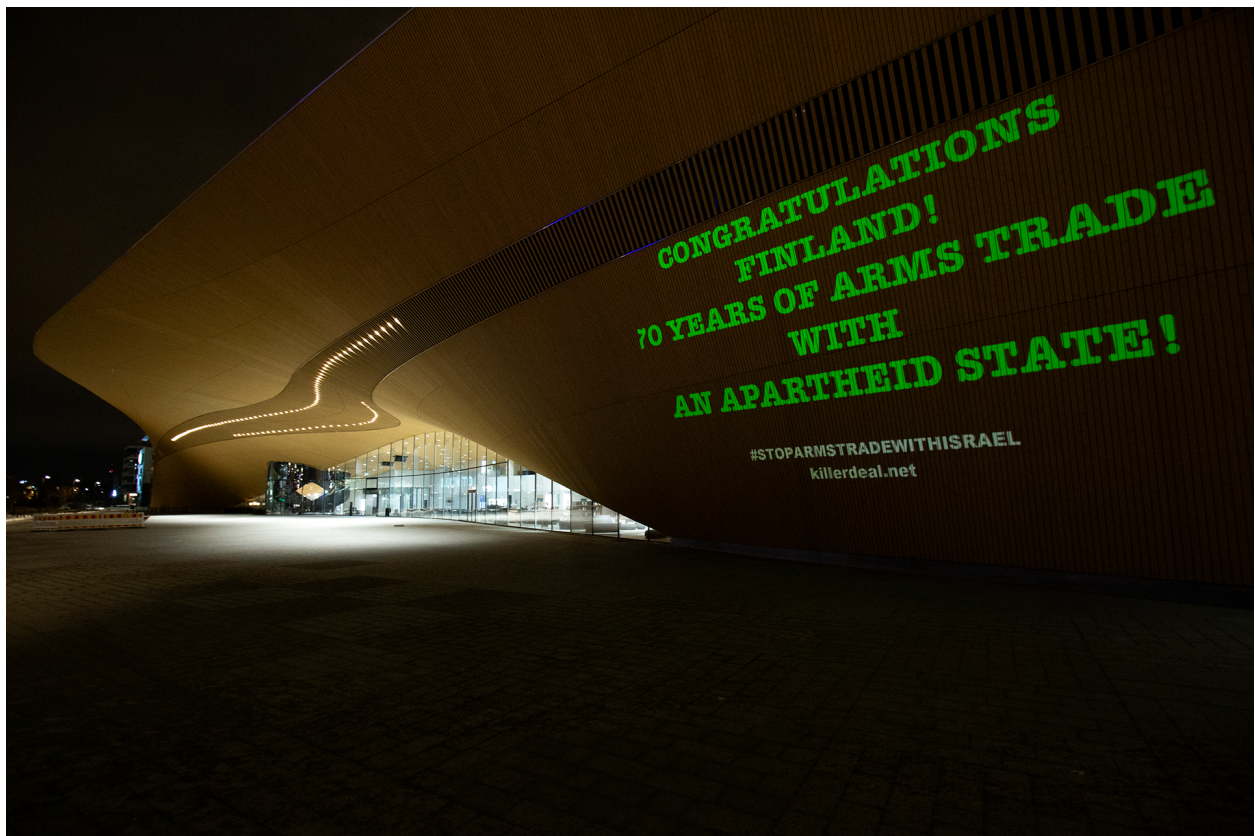


31.3.2023  
Press release

## Striking light graffiti on Helsinki's landmarks "celebrates" 70 years of arms trade between Finland and Israel

Ahead of Finland's General Election, Finnish human rights activists projected slogans on the capital city Helsinki's landmarks on 30th of March, 2023, as an act of solidarity for Palestinian people. The action is part of the *Killer Deal* campaign which calls Finland to stop arms trade with Israel.



Internationally acclaimed Helsinki Central Library Oodi. Picture: Killer Deal. Creative Commons

Israel's new government's systematic demolition of housing, forced evictions and other forms of escalating violence against Palestinian people has compelled Finnish activists to question a recently announced €200 million trade with a Israel State owned arm manufacturer. As Finland is preparing for general elections on Sunday, the activists published a survey exposing the electorate's dissonant views regarding human rights and arms trade. The activists are calling for the end of arms trade with Israel in light of Israel's recently announced plans to annex Palestinian territories – a process condemned by international law.



Finland's Ministry of Defense headquarters on March 30th, 2023. Picture: Killer Deal. Creative Commons

## Young nations share a gruesome trade history in the arms industry

In December 2022 Finland announced that it will buy over €200 million worth of missiles from the Israeli government-owned corporation Rafael Advanced Defense Systems. Other purchases from Israel in the same year include almost €100 million worth of rockets and radios from Elbit Systems. These bring the Israeli percentage of new arms deals the Finnish government announced in the [past year to over 40%](#).

This is a big increase. [During 2008–2021, Finland spent over €400 million on military equipment](#) from Israel, about 5% of its arms purchases. Finland bought anti-ship missile systems, multi-mission radars, field radios and communications equipment.

Parallel to the arms trade, Israel has continued escalating its oppression of Palestinians. During 2022, Israel killed more Palestinians on the occupied West Bank than during any year since 2005. Human rights organizations including [Amnesty International](#), [Human Rights Watch](#) and [B'Tselem](#) have published reports showing that the Israeli regime of oppression and domination over Palestinians constitutes the crime of apartheid.

This regime is maintained with constant violence. Israeli companies market their weapons as field-tested, using the Occupied Palestinian Territories as their laboratory and treating Palestinians as guinea pigs. Thousands have been killed and tens of thousands wounded,

mostly civilians, by Israeli attacks in the last 10 years alone. [According to the UN](#), 75 Palestinians have been killed by Israel only this year (2023). The killings continue with the pace of one Palestinian life lost every day.

During the past decade, Israel has moved from apartheid towards fascism. The current Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich defines himself as a "[fascist homophobe](#)". As hundreds of thousands of Israelis have risen to protest against fascism, the Finnish government continues with its plans to buy hundreds of millions of euros worth of missiles from Israel, supporting apartheid.



The Helsinki Cathedral on March 30th, 2023. Picture: Killer Deal. Creative Commons

## Activists surveyed candidates running for re-election

Parliamentary representatives running for re-election in the April 2023 General Election in Finland were surveyed about their opinions regarding arms trade between Finland and Israel, and the Palestinian human rights situation that is directly impacted by Israel arms industry.

"Israel does not comply with UN resolutions. According to international law, Israel is illegally occupying Palestinian territories, and arms trade with this country must be seriously considered," says MP **Kimmo Kiljunen** (SDP), a member of the defense committee who responded to the survey.

The survey approached 194 candidates running for re-election from ten parties, out of which 51 from eight parties were surveyed. Of the respondents to the survey, 43% support the arms trade

between Finland and Israel, and 30% oppose it. Yet, in the same breath, 67% said they would advance the human rights situation of Palestinians if re-elected, while only 6% said they would not. The question arises: How is it possible to support arming the oppressor while simultaneously vouching to advance the human rights of the oppressed?

The General Election is held on Sunday the 2nd of April, 2023.



The Helsinki Central Railway Station on March 30th, 2023 Picture: Killer Deal. Creative Commons

More information about the *Killer Deal* campaign: <https://killerdeal.net>

Download link for web and print quality images:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/6/folders/14i8lXm2UqehheRIODZ6jUaYU-7sLPxMp>