



JOINT STATEMENT

Civil society calls for accountability in Australia's military trade

Australia's military trade is not transparent. Policy experts describe defence export systems as “at best opaque and at worst negligently poor”.

Neither the public nor parliament have detailed knowledge of what military goods Australia is exporting, to where or for what purpose. There is no justification for the current level of secrecy.

Australia's military trade is growing rapidly. Government data indicates actual exports may have doubled in three years.

Australia has a legal and ethical obligation to ensure its military trade does not facilitate human rights abuses. Australia has approved military exports to many countries with documented patterns of human rights abuses, including Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Israel, the Philippines, Sudan and South Sudan. Transparency is required to ensure Australia's exports are not used in human rights abuses.

Transparency is also required to mitigate corruption. Australia has weak anti-corruption safeguards, which alongside unscrutinised procurement policies and active lobbying by military companies has led to Australia's defence sector being assessed as having a moderate corruption risk.

Australia championed **the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)** and was one of the first to ratify it. The Treaty seeks to regulate international trade in conventional arms, but in its first ten years **has not made observable progress towards its objective of reducing human suffering**. While Australia submits annual reports as required by the Treaty, its transparency falls short of what is provided by other like-minded countries. *Civil society groups have raised concerns about Australia's compliance with the ATT, citing evidence that Australian exports could have been used in human rights abuses by Israel and in Yemen.*

We call on the Australian Government to support a parliamentary review to assess the potential that arms exports could be used to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law and consider available mitigating measures.



Signatories

AUGUST 2025



1. Act for Peace
2. ACT Muslims
3. ActionAid Australia
4. Amnesty International - Australia
5. Anglican Social Responsibilities Commission (Diocese of Perth)
6. Association for the Promotion of International Law
7. Australia Palestine Advocacy Network
8. Australian Catholic Social Justice Council
9. Australian Centre for International Justice
10. Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)
11. Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
12. Australian Jewish Democratic Society
13. Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN)
14. Australian Peace and Security Forum
15. Australians for War Powers Reform
16. Canberra Palestine and Climate Justice
17. Christians for Peace Newcastle
18. Critical and Ethical Mental Health research group, University of Adelaide
19. Eurobodalla Justice for Palestine
20. Friends of Sabeel Australia
21. Friends of the Earth Australia
22. Grata Fund
23. Hindus for Human Rights ANZ
24. Human Rights Law Centre
25. Human Rights Watch
26. Independent and Peaceful Australia Network
27. International Women's Development Agency
28. Jesuit Social Services
29. Jewish Council of Australia
30. Jews for Palestine WA
31. Justice & Peace Office, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney
32. Medical Association for Prevention of War
33. Melbourne Anglican Diocese Social Responsibilities Committee
34. Muslim Women Australia (MWA)
35. National Council of Churches in Australia (NCCA)
36. Northern Rivers Friends of Palestine
37. Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network (PIEN)
38. Palestinian Christians in Australia
39. Palestinian Community of Western Australia
40. Pax Christi Australia
41. Plan International Australia
42. Quakers Australia
43. Queensland Congregational Fellowship
44. Queensland Muslims Inc.
45. Religions for Peace Australia
46. SEARCH Foundation
47. Shepparton Interfaith Network
48. Sisters of St Joseph
49. Social Responsibilities Committee, Anglican Church Southern Queensland
50. St Vincent's Ashfield Social Justice Group
51. Sydney Anti-AUKUS Coalition
52. Sydney Peace and Justice Coalition
53. The Grail
54. The Humanism Project
55. The Recollective
56. The Salvation Army
57. Transparency International Australia
58. Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA
59. United Muslims of Northern Territory Inc.
60. Uniting Church in Australia
61. Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
62. Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Western Australia
63. Wellspring Community of Australia
64. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom