



Coalition for Justice and Peace in Palestine

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Coalition for Justice and Peace in Palestine Inc.

Briefing Note

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Elbit Systems complicity in Israel's breaches of international law and human rights conventions

Summary

Australia as a signatory to core international [human rights treaties](#) and as a strong proponent of a rules based order, should not maintain or enter into any further military contracts or partnerships with Elbit Systems or Elbit Systems of Australia due to this company's ongoing complicity in Israel's grave violations of human rights conventions and international law.

Background

[Elbit Systems](#) is Israel's largest privately-owned arms and security company which produces 85 percent of the drones and land-based equipment used by the Israeli military. It is a major arms exporter that has sold its weapons as being 'field tested' which refers to the Israeli Defence Force's extensive use of Elbit weaponry in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in Gaza.

- [Elbit Systems](#) is the subject of international condemnation and divestment due to its complicity with Israel's severe violations of international law and human rights conventions.
- [Elbit drones](#) have been used on successive attacks on civilians in Gaza in [2009](#), [2012](#) and in Israel's [2014 Operation Protective Edge](#), which is now part of an [International Criminal Court investigation](#).
- Elbit drones are also used for surveillance throughout Occupied Palestinian Territory of Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem supporting the arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of civilians and the curtailment of freedom of movement throughout Jerusalem and the Occupied Territories.
- Elbit provides electronics for the 'separation wall' which was [deemed illegal](#) by the International Court of Justice in July 2004 and which supports [Israel's apartheid policies](#) which have been condemned by Israel's most prominent NGO B'tselem.
- Elbit manufactures or has manufactured [several types of weapons](#) that are considered controversial or illegal under the laws of war which include weaponized white phosphorus, cluster bombs, and flechette projectiles which the Israeli military has used in various offensives.
- Amnesty International reiterated its call for a [comprehensive arms embargo](#) of Israel in 2018 as a result of the indiscriminate shooting of unarmed protestors at the Gaza fence using weaponry produced by [IMI](#), an Israeli arms manufacturer taken over by Elbit in 2018.

Australia's Defence contracts with Elbit

Australia has entered into [numerous contracts and agreements](#) with Elbit Systems and Elbit Systems of Australia for military hardware and technology and defence [training](#). Between 2008 and 2021, Elbit Systems and Elbit Systems of Australia were awarded huge contracts by the Department of Defence and the Australian Federal Police. You can see the extent and range of contracts that the Australian government has with Elbit [here](#).

Elbit was awarded a series of contracts worth roughly \$89m when Christopher Pyne was defence minister between August 2018 and May 2019. Elbit also won contracts in 2016-17 when Pyne was defence industry minister including a \$1.4b joint contract with Harris Communications.

The lobbying company, Pyne and Partners now has Elbit Systems of Australia as a major client.

The Victorian Government has [entered into a partnership](#) with Elbit Systems of Australia in the establishment of an AI Centre of Excellence in Melbourne, which will produce applications that can be used across the defence, homeland security, and emergency services sectors.

Conclusion

In 2017 in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251, Australia submitted its voluntary pledges and commitments reaffirming its commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights, prior to taking up a seat on the Human Rights Council from 2018-2020. Australia's role in the establishment of the UN itself was highlighted and [claims were made](#) that Australia is an international human rights leader.

Maintaining trade with Elbit Systems and Elbit Systems of Australia is incompatible with these stated claims and incompatible with Australia's obligations as a signatory to key human rights conventions and its stated commitment to the international rule of law.