

What our pensions pay for

Good morning.

My name is Jane Samson. I am a BANES resident and I receive a pension from the Avon Pension Fund. I am deeply troubled about the many equity investments that APF holds in companies that profit from the illegal occupation of Palestinian land as well as from the aerospace and defence sector that is decimating Gaza and perpetrating a genocide. Information supplied this year by the Avon Pension Fund confirms that APF holds over **£22 MILLION** of public funds in such equity holdings. Due to time constraints, I will identify just a few of the companies, their products and briefly describe the harm that they do to Palestinians.

General Dynamics Corporation, the **fifth**-largest military contractor in the world in 2022, manufactures bombs including BLU-113 and BLU-109 '**bunker-busting**' bombs, and '**general purpose**' MK82 and MK84 bombs being widely used to **destroy** Gaza and **exterminate** its population. They also provide components, guns, and ammunition loading systems for Israel's fleet of F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighter jets raining fire on **Gaza's children**. It provides combat and armoured personnel vehicles including the Merkava IV tanks currently being used to **raze Gaza to the ground** and **terrorise** its people.

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Northrop Grumman, the **third**-largest military contractor in the world in 2022, provides Israel with missile systems including Longbow radar systems and Hellfire missiles for Israel's Apache helicopters and critical components its F16 and F35 fighter jets used to **target** Palestinian **homes, schools, hospitals, infrastructure** and **places of worship**.

BAE Systems, the world's **seventh** largest military contractor in 2022, supplies Israel with components for combat aircraft, munitions, missile launching kits, and armoured vehicles. BAE technologies are integrated into Israel's main weapon systems, including fighter jets, drones, and warships. BAE Systems provides weapon systems and components for Israel's F-15, F-16, and F-35 fighter jets, **used to shred Palestinian children**.

Boeing supplies the Israeli military with a wide variety of weapons, including fighter jets, **attack** helicopters, missiles, bombs, and precision-guided bomb kits. Boeing manufactures the F-15 fighter aircraft, which is one of the **main** warplanes used by the Israeli Air Force, as well as the V-22 Osprey tiltrotor military aircraft, Chinook helicopters, and the KC-46 Pegasus military refuelling and transport aircraft. The Israeli military **routinely** uses Boeing GBU-39 Small Diameter Bombs (SDBs) and larger GBU-31/32/38 bombs equipped with Boeing's Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) kits in its **assaults** on Gaza and its population.

To conclude:

Investing in companies which, according to the International Court of Justice may be **facilitating genocide, war crimes, and egregious breaches of international humanitarian law clearly** does **not** constitute a socially beneficial purpose. Adherence to international law should **not** be optional.