

We urge Poland to embrace its responsibility and ensure that this investigation is pursued thoroughly and transparently. Bit by bit, through efforts like these, we are advancing globally towards a future where accountability will indeed replace impunity.

Dyab Abou Jahjah, Director and Co-Founder of the Hind Rajab Foundation

Polish prosecutor launched an investigation into Israeli arms dealers complicity in the Gaza genocide

On September 8, 2025, the District Prosecutor's Office in Kielce confirmed that it has officially launched an investigation into Israeli weapons dealers for aiding and abetting and praising the crime of genocide and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip, following a legal complaint submitted on September 3 with the assistance of the Polish-Palestinian Justice Initiative KAKTUS, targeting Israeli arms dealers present at the International Defence Industry Exhibition (MSPO) in Kielce.

The arms expo in Kielce started on 2 September. The following day, Roman Kurkiewicz, a Polish journalist who had been involved in the Palestinian cause for nearly two decades, using evidence collected and provided by Kaktus, filed a verbal notice of possible crimes committed by representatives of the Israeli companies present. Before the expo ended, all the Israeli representatives had fled Poland and their booths were empty on the last day of MSPO.

The filing came a week after KAKTUS, alongside the Nomada Association, BAS Collective and the student movement Academy for Palestine, publicly appealed¹ to the Polish government and MSPO organizers to ban Israeli defense companies from participating in the event. The appeal cited Poland's obligations under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Despite this appeal, ten Israeli weapon companies, among them Elbit Systems, Rafael, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) and Smartshooter, exhibited at MSPO.

The complaint alleges that the representatives of Israeli arms companies praised and aided and abetted international crimes, including genocide, by promoting weapons used against civilians in Gaza as "battle-tested."

According to the media reports², the investigation is being conducted under Articles 118 and 118a of the Polish Criminal Code, which concern genocide and crimes against humanity. The case is currently being handled in rem (i.e. without charges filed against specific individuals), and further decisions are expected in the coming days.

While The Jerusalem Post reported³ that up to ten employees of Israeli defense companies were identified by police for questioning (and some fled Poland before being called in), the prosecutor's

¹ **Kaktus Initiative**, *Call to Exclude Israeli Arms Companies from MSPO in Kielce*, September 2025.

<https://nomada.info.pl/en/call-to-exclude-israeli-arms-companies-from-mspo-in-kielce>

² **Marcin Terlik / Onet.pl**, *Polish prosecution opens proceedings on genocide in Gaza*, September 2025.

<https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/tylko-w-onecie/polska-prokuratura-wszczela-postepowanie-ws-ludobojstwa-w-gazie/6zm98q6>

³ **Anna Ahronheim / The Jerusalem Post**, *Israeli defense firms face backlash at Poland's premier arms expo*, September 2025. <https://www.jpost.com/defense-and-tech/article-866508>

office has so far confirmed the interrogation of two individuals. Both were representatives of Israeli companies exhibiting at the arms expo in Kielce (MSPO).

Many of the Israeli companies at MSPO, including Elbit, Rafael, IAI and Smartshooter, openly advertised their technologies as “battle-tested” or “combat proven. Smartshooter was referring specifically to their deployment in Israel’s “Operation Iron Sword”, meaning the ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip. In practice, these weapons are tested not in a battle, but mainly against unarmed civilians, in the process of executing international crimes, including genocide.

Despite the growing body of evidence documenting mass atrocities, military cooperation continues to form a cornerstone of Polish-Israeli bilateral relations. Rather than acting on its legal obligations under the Genocide Convention and Common Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions, the Polish government has recently announced plans for new arms deals with Israel.

The arms industry plays a central role in the highly militarised Israeli society. In 2024 alone, Israel reached a record in weapons exports, totaling \$14.8 billion—nearly double the annual average prior to the ongoing war in Gaza.⁴ Over half of these exports were purchased by European countries.⁵ Europe so far instead of imposing arms embargo, has rewarded Israel with billions of dollars worth weapons purchases and hence contributed to financing and legitimising the extermination of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

In this context, the presence of Israeli weapons manufacturers at MSPO in Kielce is not an isolated incident but part of a broader pattern of normalising and profiting from state violence.

Examples of technologies promoted in Kielce on 2/09/2025 that were used in documented crimes:

- **Smartshooter** – a computerised sighting system that locks the trigger until the barrel is perfectly aligned. At the trade fair, company representatives openly talk about its use in Gaza. Documentation indicates that the system increases the effectiveness of shooting at moving targets, which in Gaza likely could be fleeing aidseekers.
- **IAI (Israel Aerospace Industries)** – manufacturer of LAHAT guided missiles. According to findings by Hind Rajab Foundation and PCHR⁶, on 25 August 2025, they were used to fire on the Nasser Hospital in Khan Yunis, killing 22 civilians, including medical staff, journalists and a child. The case has been referred to the International Criminal Court.
- **Elbit Systems** – the main supplier of drones to the IOF advertised in Kielce, among other things, the Thor and Magni X drones used in Gaza. Elbit also supplies the IOF with Hermes drones, which were used extensively in Gaza, including, on 2 April 2024 in an attack on a

⁴ Emanuel Fabian / *Times of Israel*, *Israeli arms sales break record for 4th year in row, reaching \$14.8 billion in 2024*, 4 June 2025.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-arms-sales-break-record-for-4th-year-in-row-reaching-14-8-billion-in-2024/>

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ Hind Rajab Foundation & Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, *HRF and PCHR File ICC Complaint on the Nasser Hospital Massacre: Exposing the Command Chain Behind the Killing of 22 Civilians*, 31 August 2025.

<https://www.hindrajabfoundation.org/perpetrators/hrf-and-pchr-file-icc-complaint-on-the-nasser-hospital-massacre-exposing-the-command-chain-behind-the-killing-of-22-civilians>

World Central Kitchen humanitarian convoy, killing seven volunteers, including a Polish citizen, Damian Soból.⁷

- **Rafael** – a state-owned company producing i.a. SPIKE missiles and Firefly loitering munitions. It was most likely a SPIKE missile attached to an Elbit drone that killed Damian Soból and 6 other volunteers.⁸ The company recently posted video footage of Firefly used to kill an unarmed Palestinian in Gaza - a possible war crime.⁹

Legal basis

The conduct of representatives of Israeli companies may constitute offences under the Polish Criminal Code:

- Article 126a of the Polish Criminal Code – condoning international crimes,
- aiding and abetting crimes specified in Articles 118–125 of the Polish Criminal Code – crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, attacks on civilians and protected objects.

Furthermore, allowing such practices in Poland violates:

- the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948),
- the Geneva Conventions (in particular Article 1 common: obligation to ensure compliance with humanitarian law),
- the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT),
- EU Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on arms exports.

The French precedent – Eurosatory 2024

Similar actions were the subject of intervention in France during the Eurosatory 2024 trade fair. French courts considered complaints from Al Haq, ASER, AFPS and Stop Fuelling Wars, pointing out that allowing Israeli companies to promote weapons in Paris would constitute a violation of France's obligations under the Genocide Convention, the Geneva Conventions and the ATT¹⁰. As a result, the French government announced the exclusion of the Israeli defence industry from the fair.

Poland, as a party to the same treaties, **has identical legal obligations** and cannot allow the promotion of weapons used for genocide and war crimes.

Call to action

The KAKTUS initiative call for:

- **Polish prosecutor to thoroughly and transparently conduct the investigation into the alleged crimes** against representatives of Israeli companies present in Kielce,

⁷ Amos Harel /Haaretz, *IDF drone fired three missiles at World Central Kitchen aid convoy—even though the armed Hamas member wasn't there*, 2 April 2024.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2024-04-02/ty-article/.premium/idf-bombed-wck-aid-convoy-3-times-targeting-armed-hamas-member-who-wasnt-there/0000018e-9e75-d764-adff-9eff29360000>

⁸ Shayan Sardarizadeh, Benedict Garman & Thomas Spencer / BBC News, *Gaza aid convoy strike: What we know*, 5 April 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68714128>

⁹ Rettman, Andrew/ EUobserver, *Israeli arms firm could lose EU funds over Gaza drone-kill video*, July 2024. <https://euobserver.com/eu-and-the-world/ar3d4c0186>

¹⁰ Al-Haq, *Al-Haq and Partners Win Case Against COGES: Israeli arms companies, their affiliates and all Israeli delegations or intermediaries are barred from EUROSATORY arms fair*, 2024. <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/23311.html>

- **state authorities** (Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local authorities) end all cooperation with companies that profit from systematic violations of human rights and international law, impose sanctions and full embargo on the arms trade with Israel;
- Poland fulfils its treaty obligations and stops being complicit in the genocide by tolerating its glorification on its territory.

We also call for dropping charges against BAS activists, who protested at the Kielce expo by throwing fake blood at the Elbit's booth and calling for an end of genocide. It is outrageous that nearly seven decades since signing the Genocide Convention, we are still struggling with the same issues as Lemkin did - perpetrators of the worst crimes have impunity, while law is applied rigoursly to those protesting the crimes. Those complicit in the the massive destruction of the entire Gaza Strip were free to go after a brief interrogation, while activists protesting genocide were detained and face serious charges.