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DSEi Arms Fair 2005

The global arms trade comes to London

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Cover: The F2000 LG1 with optical grenade launcher, DSEi 2003. Tony Kyriacou/Rex Features

Summary

DSEi, which takes place every other year in east London, is one of the world's largest arms fairs. This year it will play host to over 1,100 companies, around 70 official military delegations, and 20,000 'visitors' from across the globe.

It is organised by Spearhead, a subsidiary of Reed Elsevier, and the UK Ministry of Defence. Ownership of what was then the Royal Navy & British Army Equipment Exhibition passed to Spearhead following the arrival of the Labour government in 1997, but it was very much a token privatisation. The UK government remains integral, inviting and hosting military delegations, providing ministers for profile and the armed forces for equipment and demonstrations. DSEi is subsidised by the UK taxpayer, both in terms of the arms fair itself and the policing that is required to stage it.

Amongst this year's exhibitors are eight of the world's ten largest arms producers, including Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, General Dynamics, EADS and BAE Systems. They are complemented by the component suppliers needed to produce their aircraft, missiles, warships and armoured vehicles. In addition, there will be numerous producers of other lethal equipment such as small arms and ammunition, and cluster munitions (we don't yet know how many companies will be actively marketing these). Finally, the full range of support equipment will be available: from IT systems to tents to fencing to restraint products. All the equipment and weaponry required by the world's armed forces will be on display.

Companies come to DSEi to meet arms buyers, and these are available in droves. Official military delegations are invited by both the UK government and Spearhead, but there are also 'visitors' who represent military industry, governments and armed forces from around the world. At DSEi 2003 official delegations were invited from governments involved in 12 major armed conflicts taking place that year, a situation that is unlikely to change this year. Colombia, Russia, Israel and the countries occupying Iraq are likely to be present again. India and Pakistan

will almost certainly both be invited and China may well receive another invitation regardless of its threats against Taiwan. The human rights records of many of these governments is appalling but they will not be alone. Saudi Arabia will be invited despite a human rights situation that Amnesty International describes as 'dire'. Arms will also be promoted to countries that have significant development needs, diverting funds from vital public services. The United Nations provides a Human Development Index of countries based on life expectancy, average income and enrolment in education. The bottom third of this Index includes the DSEi 2003 invitees Angola, Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, Botswana, India, Morocco, Egypt and South Africa. Nearly all of these are in receipt of UK development aid.

DSEi is an integral part of the global arms trade. It is a significant stop on the circuit that sees international arms fairs in the Middle East, Europe, North and South America, South and South East Asia and Africa. When DESO, the UK government's arms sales unit, has finished its extensive support of DSEi, it moves on to promote UK weaponry at arms fairs in India, Jordan, South Africa, the US and Chile. While arms fairs may emphasise different types of arms, the same companies and customers will meet at many of them. They will make contact, negotiate and sign contracts. They may do this over a number of arms fairs and also between arms fairs. Where and when the contract is signed isn't important; just as long as it is.

DSEi is an international arms fair on an international arms fair circuit. It is not concerned with the UK's national interest but only with companies selling arms and making money. Yet the UK government provides unquestioning political and financial support at the expense of the taxpayers and without any economic or ethical justification. DSEi, like the arms trade generally, is adept at taking taxpayers' money and converting it into arms company profits. And while the money rolls in, the conflicts and the human rights abuses continue.

Introduction

Defence Systems and Equipment International is an international arms fair and an important date in the worldwide arms fair calendar. It will take place from 13th–16th September this year at ExCel in east London.

DSEi is all about buying and selling arms. There will be over 1,100 exhibitors, around 70 military delegations and 20,000 'pre-qualified' visitors. Weaponry from around the world will be marketed to buyers from around the world. It will happen behind closed doors. The thousands of buyers and sellers will hover over military equipment and disappear off into 'hospitality suites' for private discussions and negotiations. And it will all happen with not only

government approval, but also political and financial support. It is the arms trade in a nutshell.

This briefing is intended to provide an overview of the DSEi arms fair and some of the many issues that are of serious concern. Section 2 gives DSEi's background and focuses on its organisers and the role and justifications of the UK government. Sections 3 and 4 look at the parties who make DSEi what it is: first the companies and the arms they sell; and second, the buyers and how they use them. Finally, Section 5 considers the wider international arms fair circuit, its importance to the arms trade, and DSEi's role within it.

DSEi organisers – Reed Elsevier and the UK government

The DSEi arms fair is organised by Spearhead Exhibitions 'in association with' the UK's Ministry of Defence (MoD). It is the only UK arms fair with this formal relationship. The MoD's involvement is led by the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO), the official body that exists to sell UK weapons overseas on behalf of arms companies and which has organised the government's arms fairs for decades.

From 1976 to 1991, DESO¹ ran the British Army Equipment Exhibition and the Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition in alternate years until the first combined Royal Navy & British Army Equipment Exhibition was held in 1993. This was repeated, at Aldershot, in 1995 and 1997, after which the incoming Labour government decided to transfer the organisation of the arms fair to the private sector. 'Ownership' was handed over to Spearhead Exhibitions Ltd, then part of the US 'event and communications agency' PGI, and the 1999 version of the armed forces arms fair became Defence Systems and Equipment International.

This first DSEi took place at Chertsey in Surrey, but in 2001 it was moved to the ExCel centre in London's Docklands in order to add warships to the exhibition and to be more easily accessible to both exhibitors and buyers. However, the first DSEi at ExCel was fated to start on 11th September 2001. While many activities around the world were cancelled as a mark of respect, the business of selling arms continued unabated. As Jane's Defence Industry stated, 'though the mood was sombre for the rest of the week, the exhibition and accompanying conference were rated a success'.^{1a} It might be thought that the military and, in particular, government officials would have shown sensitivity and cancelled the remaining days, but clearly the only issue that mattered was business.

The first two DESi exhibitions were primarily concerned with land and naval equipment, but after DSEi 2001 it was decided to bring in military aerospace. This comprised 25% of DSEi 2003. The organisers' target was then to increase military aerospace to 33% by DSEi 2005 and for it to be 'the world's pre-eminent tri-service event.'

The change from the Royal Navy & British Army Equipment Exhibition, which was all about exporting UK-produced arms, to a privately-owned international arms fair is indicative of wider changes in the arms trade. Boundaries in the arms industry are fading fast: the larger players in the UK arms industry are at least as interested in obtaining US contracts as UK contracts (and are rapidly purchasing US companies and changing the focus of their production in order to win these); conversely, the UK MoD is purchasing more and more of its equipment from companies that are based outside the UK, both directly and from companies that are moving into the UK, most strikingly from Thales and Finmeccanica after their purchases of Racal and Westland, respectively.

But despite the internationalisation of the arms industry and the supposed privatisation of DSEi, there is no let-up in UK government support for it, either financially or politically. It arranges invitations for delegations from the armed forces of other countries, contributes towards the costs of hosting these, pays for security for the event in the form of both civilian and Ministry of Defence police, supplies armed forces personnel for demonstrations at the event, and gives it profile through the attendance of ministers and senior officials.

Like the arms trade as a whole, DSEi is focused entirely on business and profit but manages to get the taxpayer to facilitate it and fund it.

Reed Elsevier/Spearhead

In December 2001 there was a management buyout of Spearhead Exhibitions from PGI, then on the day before DSEi 2003 started it was acquired by Reed Elsevier.² The acquisition added three arms fairs to the four already in Reed Elsevier's 'aerospace and defence' portfolio.³

Reed Elsevier is a massive publishing group with four main businesses. One of these is Reed Business which includes Reed Exhibitions and, in turn, Spearhead Exhibitions. Reed Exhibitions (including Spearhead) organises around 430 'trade and

consumer exhibitions' in 32 countries.⁴ Of these, seven are arms fairs:

- Latin America Aero & Defence, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
- Taipei Aerospace and Defence Technology Exhibition, Taipei, Taiwan
- ITEC ('Defence Training, Education and Simulation'), London, UK/Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Helitech UK, Cambridge, UK (Spearhead)
- Asian Aerospace and Asian Defence Technology, Singapore
- Unmanned Underwater Vehicle Showcase, Southampton, UK (Spearhead)
- and, of course, DSEi. (Spearhead)

Clearly Reed Elsevier sees the arms industry as just another business sector and arms fairs as just another events portfolio to be expanded. However, arms fairs are only a small part of its business (only 0.5% of total revenue, even now⁵) and Reed Elsevier's involvement in the arms trade was little noticed until the purchase of Spearhead. But there is now increasing concern amongst a number of shareholders and serious questions about its reputation. The company itself appears a little unsure of its stance on the arms trade. At its 2005 AGM, the board was repeatedly asked about the purchase of Spearhead and the ethics of their involvement in DSEi. Astonishingly, the Chairman said it was all right as long as 'we don't deal ourselves in these kind of things, I suppose'. When further pressed over Spearhead and DSEi, the board claimed that they were providing 'an open and transparent process', a claim that is difficult to assess given that, as Reed Elsevier states, '[DSEi] is not open to members of the public!'^{6a}

In addition to 'owning' DSEi, Reed Exhibitions was reported to have a stake in the ExCel centre. In November 2000, the Sunday Times⁶ reported that it held 11% of ExCel's equity and a few months later the same newspaper stated that ExCel had raised a further £20m from shareholders, including Reed Exhibitions.⁷

The UK government

The government's support for DSEi is wide-ranging. It is essentially the co-organiser, with DESO taking the lead government role. Because of the secrecy surrounding DSEi we can't know about all aspects of the government's support, but what is in the public domain is still striking. It includes:

Inviting and hosting overseas military delegations⁸ (see page 15, 'The buyers')

Ministerial support – MoD Ministers officially open DSEi, publicly sign agreements to generate publicity and generally press the flesh. In answer to a parliamentary question about which overseas delegates each Minister met at DSEi 2003, the House of Commons was told that Ministers or MoD officials 'met delegations that were officially invited to the event.'⁹ No mean feat with official delegations from 55 countries, many of which with more than one delegation. In 2003, the Secretary of State for Defence, Geoff Hoon, the Minister of State for Defence Procurement, Lord Bach and the Minister of State for the armed forces, Adam Ingram all attended along with other 'Senior UK VIPs' including: 'Service Chiefs and single service staff; Chief of Defence Logistics and senior staff; Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Equipment Capability) and senior staff; Deputy Scientific Advisor; Chief of Defence Procurement, senior staff and Integrated Project Team Leaders; Operational Commands and Headquarters Staff'.¹⁰

The high-level support continued in 2003 at the Defence Manufacturers Association (DMA) / DSEi Dinner, held on the penultimate day of the arms fair. Though the Secretary of State had been called abroad, Lord Bach was able to attend as the Principal Guest and Speaker. The DMA were also 'particularly pleased to welcome senior MoD and Government officials' including Adam Ingram.¹¹ Confusingly, when asked in parliament about attendance at the exhibition dinner, Mr Ingram replied 'There was no official exhibition dinner or reception.'¹²

Organising armed forces demonstrations – at DSEi 2003, members of the armed forces demonstrated equipment produced by about 70 UK companies.¹³ According to DESO, the event saw the best demonstrations they had arranged for many years. One of these involved the Royal Armoured Corps, the Royal Engineers, the Royal Artillery and the Infantry deploying to 'a wooded marine region'.

Defence Export Services Organisation

DESO is the government agency that co-ordinates UK arms sales. It exists solely to increase UK arms exports and acts as a taxpayer-funded marketing organisation for arms companies.

It has around 600 staff, mostly London-based but also working in about 14 offices in key country markets for UK arms. These offices generally have just a handful of employees (for example, 2 in each of the offices in India, Singapore, South Africa and South Korea) but 59 people are reported to work at the Saudi Arabian office.ⁱ

DESO's head, presently Alan Garwood, is always seconded from an arms company and is responsible directly to the Secretary of State for Defence. He (it has always been a 'he') is responsible for advising government ministers on arms exports,ⁱⁱ a role that mirrors but also formalises the privileged access of many other arms industry executives. Garwood's position and DESO's role of co-ordinating wider government support for arms exports means that the arms trade agenda is relentlessly promoted across government. It is hard to imagine any other industry receiving this level of internal influence.

i Hansard 1 July 2002

ii www.deso.mod.uk

The other took place in the dock, with the Royal Engineers showing 'small boats, bridging equipment, explosive ordnance disposal and force protection.' Each of these took place four times each day.¹⁴

Providing military equipment for the exhibition, most notably ships: HMS Grafton, a Royal Navy frigate; HMS Bangor, a Royal Navy minehunter; and HMCC Searcher, a customs cutter.

Sponsorship – a government agency, dstl (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory), sponsored the main DSEi conference that took place alongside the arms fair in 2003.¹⁵

Policing – there is a massive police presence at DSEi, primarily from the Metropolitan Police and British Transport Police. However, at DSEi 2003, they were also joined by 43 Ministry of Defence Police (including a marine unit of 12).¹⁶ Throughout the

arms fair the police used anti-terrorist powers to stop and search peaceful protesters.

Ignoring the law – in sharp contrast with the zealous policing of protesters and activists, exhibitors showing 'prohibited weapons' without a licence seemed to merit only a softly-softly approach. A report in *the Mirror*, based on a leaked document and a 'senior Home Office source' stated that police chiefs had initially wanted to shut DSEi down but that 'Scotland Yard was issued with orders from "ministerial level" to ignore the law being broken.'¹⁷ The government later acknowledged that exhibitors had arrived without the necessary documentation and said that this was rectified before they were allowed to exhibit firearms.¹⁸

Actual taxpayer costs of DSEi

DSEi is heavily subsidised by the government. The MoD's direct costs alone for DSEi 2003 were estimated to be £400,000,¹⁹ but this did not include additional activities that government representatives might carry out 'as part of their normal duties'.²⁰ There is no breakdown to show how the figure is arrived at, or how the above aspects of government support fit into this.

The policing of the event was even more costly. Immediately after the event the government estimated police costs of around £1.7 million, saying that the final cost remained to be established.²¹ When it was established several months later, the cost to taxpayers had reached £4.4 million.^{21a} There is a little scope for optimism on this score as the Metropolitan Police Authority was reported to have said of DSEi 2003 that 'Policing the event cost a lot of money and it seems reasonable to look at recouping some of that.'²²

Once DSEi is over, arms companies know that they will continue to receive any support they need from the government to facilitate their proposed exports from the UK.

Why support DSEi?

The government's support for DSEi is not a surprise; it is entirely consistent with its support for the arms trade as a whole. To understand the support for both it is necessary to get past the arms trade justifications promoted by both government and industry (see box). Some of the government's justifications are bizarre, others may have been valid in the past but

The government's arms trade justifications

The government uses a wide range of arguments to justify its support for the arms trade, whether this involves arms exports or the presence of international arms fairs on UK soil. They are briefly considered below.ⁱ

Arms exports support the UK's allies around the world – the UK exported weaponry to over 130 countries last year. Whether they are or not UK allies appears to have no relevance whatsoever.

Countries have a right to self defence – there is no assessment by the UK government of whether the equipment is to be used for 'self defence'. Nearly all conflicts are internal and much more complex than a response to external aggression.

Arms exports help peace and security – the idea of arms exports assisting peace is extraordinarily naive or disingenuous. Where there is tension, arms purchases can make conflict more likely and, once it is under way, more deadly. But do they assist security? This clearly depends on what is meant by security: arms exports certainly help security forces suppress internal or separatist dissent, including in Israel and Saudi Arabia. The money wasted on arms also detracts from genuine human security – the need for health care, education, water etc.

Arms exports benefit the Defence Budget – there are some savings to the MoD budget due to the longer production runs that can result from exports. However, these savings are outweighed by the subsidies put into arms exports. The government, very optimistically, estimates savings of £300 million per year. Even conservative estimates of arms export subsidies puts these at £450-900 million per year.

The need for a 'Defence Industrial Base' – the Defence Industrial Base is traditionally seen as UK-owned companies producing arms in the UK for the

UK military. But this no longer exists. The UK is dependent on equipment from overseas and the major UK headquartered companies are increasingly seeking to be part of the US 'Defence Industrial Base'. They are loyal to international shareholders rather than to the UK government.

Arms exports are important to the economy – the arms companies that dominate UK military industry account for only 1.2% of the FTSE index (including any civil business they have), arms exports account for around 1.5% of visible exports, arms export employment is only 0.2% of the UK workforce, and technical innovation is dominated by the civil sector with the military seeking 'spin-in' rather than claiming to produce 'spin-offs'.

Arms exports provide irreplaceable jobs – a few local communities are dependent on arms export jobs and would need specific assistance if arms exports were to end, but most arms export jobs are in areas of very low unemployment. Far from arms companies providing jobs where they are needed, they can take employees away from non-military work. The South East has by far the greatest number of arms export jobs and also virtually full employment. Even a report co-authored by MoD economists has concluded that a reduction in military exports would lead to an increase in jobs.ⁱⁱ There are presently 65,000 UK jobs dependent directly or indirectly on arms exports. This is down from 175,000 in 1996/7 – a change which has not had any negative impact on the national economy.

- i More detail on several of these arguments can be found in Emma Mayhew, 'A Dead Giveaway: A Critical Analysis of New Labour's Rationales for Supporting Military Exports', *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 26, No. 1, April 2005
- ii M. Chalmers, N.V. Davies, K. Hartley and C. Wilkinson, 'The Economic Costs and Benefits of UK Defence Exports', University of York Centre of Defence Economics, November 2001

are no longer, and some tap in to widely held misconceptions.

But they are not the reasons why the massive political and financial support continues. The real reasons are primarily a combination of the following:

- The arms industry, armed forces and government are intimately linked through a vast number of personal ties (e.g. due to the 'revolving door') and formal arrangements (e.g. due to DESO and the network of advisory quangos).

- The government panders to big business in general.

There may be other factors that could be included, such as unstated foreign policy goals or some residual belief held by politicians in the 'jobs' and 'economics' arguments, but they are subsidiary ones. The motivation for supporting arms exports comes from the economic/corporate policy of the government and the continuation of the military-industrial-political complex. It is not about 'defence', security, the economy or even jobs.²³

The government is fully behind the major arms companies and the overseas sales they win. Arms exports are encouraged unless a UN or EU arms embargo is in place or the government is embarrassed into (often token) restrictions until the fuss dies down (eg. Pakistan, Israel, Indonesia, Zimbabwe). The government's practice is, in effect, arms control by embarrassment. Arms promotion is the rule and support of DSEi is absolutely in line with this.

The sellers

There is nothing defensible about DSEi. Even the Defence Manufacturers Association (one of DSEi's official 'supporters') and DSEi itself have found themselves at a loss to know how to justify it to the public. In desperation they have resorted to suggesting that DSEi actually isn't an arms fair! Speaking at DSEi 2001, Lord Bach, then UK Minister of Defence Procurement, tried to take a similar line but only clarified the issue... 'This is not *just* an arms fair.'²⁴ (emphasis added)

There is no need even to look beyond the DMA and DSEi's own literature for rebuttals:

DSEi Brochures²⁵ state that:

'The world's defence suppliers and their customers meet at DSEi to discuss and conduct business in a central London location'

and

'We recognise that DSEi fulfils an important role within the selling process for defence companies'

and

there are hospitality suites that 'provide an ideal setting for private discussion and hosted entertainment with existing and potential customers'

And the DMA report of DSEi 2003 stated that many of the exhibitors in its 'UK Partnership Pavilion had a truly bumper business week'.²⁶

But perhaps the real sense of what DSEi is comes from knowing who is inside, both sellers and buyers.

Who's selling what

As of 15 August, 1134 companies were confirmed as exhibitors at DSEi 2005, around 160 more than at the previous DSEi and 470 more than the one before that.²⁷ The companies come from 36 countries. Around half are from the UK and the next largest group (168) is from the US. Europe accounts for

many of the others (Germany – 57, France – 30, Italy – 26, and then in descending order Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, Norway, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Spain, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Croatia, Luxembourg, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro and Ireland). The remaining exhibitors are from Canada (30), Australia (23), Israel (23), South Africa (21), Jordan (5), India (4), China, Pakistan and the UAE (2), and Thailand and Turkey (1).

The big guns

Where would the world's largest 'tri-service' arms fair be without the companies that produce and show the 'big ticket' weaponry: tanks, fighter aircraft, warships, missiles, torpedoes? These companies are in copious supply at this year's DSEi. Most strikingly, eight of the world's top ten arms-producing companies have booked. First and foremost is Lockheed Martin, the world's largest arms company and manufacturer of fighter and transport aircraft, missiles, space systems, nuclear weapons etc. Lockheed is joined by the other massive US arms producers Northrop Grumman (warships, missiles, radar systems, space systems), Raytheon (missiles and space systems) and General Dynamics (warships, nuclear submarines, armoured vehicles). Then there are the major European arms companies: BAE Systems (fighter aircraft, warships, torpedoes, missiles, tanks, small arms ammunition), Thales (missiles, naval systems, radar), EADS (fighter aircraft, missiles, helicopters, space systems) and Finmeccanica (aircraft, military vehicles, missiles, small arms/ammunition). This ensemble of companies may only comprise a small percentage of exhibitors at DSEi, but they will have the big stands, over two thirds of the allocated 'hospitality suites',²⁸ and will dominate the exhibition as a whole.

Though the production of large weapons systems and 'platforms'²⁹ such as aircraft and warships is limited to a few enormous companies, there will be extensive competition at DSEi over components and less complex weaponry. The remainder of this section considers some of these categories more closely.

Small arms

Arguably the most notorious category of weapons that will be on display at DSEi, small arms include assault rifles, sniper rifles, machine guns, submachine guns and pistols. They are the world's day-to-day killing machines, the easily available weapons that can stay in circulation for decades, being resold time and time again. Most casualties in armed conflict are civilian and about 90% of these casualties are caused by small arms and light weapons. They can fuel the violence and breed the fear and instability that has led to millions of refugees and internally displaced people.

The DSEi exhibitors who produce small arms and their ammunitions include the major companies BAE Systems and General Dynamics, but they are joined by a plethora of others including: Arsenal Co (Bulgaria); Glock and Steyr Mannlicher (Austria); FN Herstal (Belgium); Heckler & Koch, Rheinmetall and J.P Sauer & Sohn (Germany); Diemaco (Canada); Giat Industries (France); Nammo (Norway); Helston Gunsmiths (UK); Rafael and Soltam Systems (Israel); Denel (South Africa); and Pakistan Ordnance Factories (Pakistan).

Cluster munitions

Cluster munitions or bombs carry a number of submunitions that separate from their carrier and explode independently. They have become high-profile and controversial as they are particularly likely to kill and injure civilians. This can happen both during attack, due to their wide dispersal pattern and frequent inaccuracy, and also afterwards as many of the submunitions fail to explode, potentially doing so later and causing harm. Human Rights Watch reports that during the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the months following it, no weapon used by the US-led forces caused more civilian casualties than cluster munitions.³⁰ Nearly 13,000 cluster bombs were used by UK and US forces in Iraq that year. With a submunition failure rate of at least 5%, the bombs injured and killed more than 1,000 civilians. Because the unexploded cluster submunitions are colourful and about the size of a soft-drinks can they have often attracted the attention of children.

At DSEi 2003, the political pressure around cluster munitions rose to the point where DSEi 'suggested it was inappropriate'³¹ to display cluster weapons. However, at least one company, Israel Military Industries, proceeded to do so. It is not known whether individual companies will be marketing their

cluster munitions this year, but there is unlikely to be anything to stop them. Like almost all weapons, they remain legal. There will be at least 17 cluster bomb producers present at DSEi 2005. These known companies are³² Lockheed Martin (US), EADS (Europe), BAE Systems (UK), Daimler Chrysler (Germany), Diehl Munitions System (Germany), Expal Explosions (Spain), Giat Industries (France), MBDA (France), Rheinmetall (Germany), RUAG (Switzerland), SAAB Bofors (Sweden), Denel (South Africa), General Dynamics (USA), L-3 Communications (USA), Northrop Grumman (USA), Raytheon (USA) and Textron (USA).

Armoured vehicles

Unlike cluster bombs, armoured vehicles are often considered to be a straight-forward, standard form of military equipment. Nonetheless, they are a military apparatus that has often attracted concern because of the likelihood of their being used by governments which abuse human rights. Armoured vehicles were used by the Chinese armed forces against demonstrators in the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, when hundreds, possibly thousands of demonstrators for democracy were killed by the People's Liberation Army, and in South Africa The Apartheid Debt and Reparations Campaign of Jubilee South Africa has taken out law suits in US courts to hold to account those companies that manufactured the armoured vehicles used to wreak havoc in the townships during the apartheid era.

As armoured vehicles are the least complicated of the 'platforms', there remain a large number of producers. Those who will be present at this year's DSEi include: ABRO (UK), BAE Systems (UK), Daimler Chrysler (Germany), General Dynamics (US), Giat Industries (France), Mowag (Switzerland), Patria (Finland), Pearson Engineering Ltd (UK) and Plasan Sasa (Israel). There will also be many companies present that do not manufacture the vehicles themselves, but rather specialise in developing systems, engines and components for armoured vehicles, some examples are Kinetics (Israel), Denel (South Africa), Ashot Ashkelon Industries (Israel) and William Cook Defence (UK).

Playing their part

Despite the long, but still partial, lists of arms producers above, most exhibitors at DSEi do not produce complete weapons systems but instead are suppliers to these companies or provide services to the military or military industry. It is difficult to

In the news...

Caterpillar

Caterpillar is well known for making construction equipment, but it also sells to the military market. A UK-based Caterpillar subsidiary, Perkins Engines, makes engines for tanks and naval vessels, including those used by the British Army. However, it is Caterpillar's military bulldozers that have caused a particular outcry. Its D9 bulldozer is a fearsome armoured vehicle and is regularly used by the Israeli Army in its demolitions of Palestinian homes and olive groves. Often modified to include machine-gun mounts, it is an important attack vehicle in Israeli assaults on Palestinian towns and villages.

Palestinian rights activists have recently focussed attention on Caterpillar in an effort to stop it selling bulldozers to Israel. They are calling for a consumer boycott of Caterpillar (which also makes branded clothing) and for direct protests to the company. The Church of England is also considering divestment after the worldwide Anglican Communion voted to recommend this to its affiliated churches in June. Caterpillar, however, is continuing to push its military products with a significant presence at DSEi 2005.

More info: www.waronwant.org/caterpillar

EDO MBM Technology

EDO MBM Technology is a UK subsidiary of the EDO Corporation and is based just outside Brighton. It manufactures electrical components for missiles, fighter planes and tanks. In 2003 it won a contract to supply release mechanisms for the Paveway series of guided bombs. These were used extensively during the invasion of Iraq.

Since the Iraq war, a vibrant local campaign has grown up against EDO MBM, demanding an end to arms manufacture in the area. Activities have included marches and non-violent direct action. This year, the company sought a civil injunction against protesters under the Protection from Harassment Act, which was designed to protect people from stalkers. This blatant attack on the right to protest was not successful, although the court did place some restrictions on protesters.

EDO will be hoping to drum up more custom with a large stand at DSEi 2005.

More info: www.smashedo.org.uk

accurately represent the cross-section of military equipment that will be found at DSEi, but two indicative samples can be found in Appendix 2 where all the exhibitors from South Africa and, separately, Israel are listed along with their main products. South Africa's representation has a cross-section that is similar to DSEi as a whole, while the Israeli group contains more producers of complete weapons systems.

Component and sub-systems suppliers – The single largest category of exhibitors are those producing sub-systems, components and parts for the final equipment producers. This includes engineering equipment such as avionics, motors, motion control equipment, etc. but also smaller electrical components such as cables, wires and antennas. However, these are not just small companies. Included in this group are the UK plcs Cobham and Smiths Group, both of which are in the world's top 50 arms companies.

Cobham is a multi-national group of companies specializing in aerospace, precision engineering and air services. Military sales make up 50% of its turnover and its products include aircraft and missile components, avionics and flight operations and services. Smiths' military work is also mainly concentrated on the aerospace business, producing electronics and components for civil and military aircraft. 25% of its production is military. Although it does not produce finished weapons systems, Smiths Group received unwanted publicity in 2002 when it was revealed that missile trigger systems manufactured by the company were used in US-made Apache attack helicopters supplied to Israel.

Support equipment suppliers – Another sizeable group of exhibitors comprises those producing military support equipment. This group includes manufacturers of products as diverse as water purification systems, hands free hydration systems, coolers, tents, folding stretchers, fencing products,

restraint products such as strappings, dispensers and buckles, and IT-related products and services. The group includes companies such as Aply Shelters (UK), Base-X Expedition Shelters (USA), Canvas & Tents (South Africa), Safety X-press Stromberg (South Africa), Camelbak (USA), Ricor Cryogenic & Vacuum Systems (Israel), Shoshana Metal Work Factories (Israel), European Security Fencing (Spain) and Goliath Footwear (UK). Companies providing IT products and services include Logica (UK), Cornwell management consultancy (UK), Blazepoint (UK), EDS

Defence (UK), LSC Group (UK) and SBS Technologies (Germany).

As DSEi states, 'September 13–16 will see all elements of the supply chain come together'.³³ There will be large numbers of producers of weapons and weapons systems, the full range of sub-systems and component suppliers for this equipment, and providers of the support equipment and services required for military operations.

The buyers

The top priority for arms companies is to meet buyers and this is what DSEi provides. As its 2005 brochure states, it delivers:

- ‘Well-organised, top level international delegations
- UK ministers and senior staff involved in UK defence procurement
- Senior international visitors and military influencers’
- Defence & aerospace media sales
- Armed Forces personnel
- Government officials/civil servants
- Government agency executives
- Defence & aerospace research establishment executives
- Equipment procurement organisations
- Defence college staff & students
- Accredited defence & aerospace editorial press or national/regional media³⁸

Official Delegations

Each DSEi, DESO prepares a list of countries to receive official invitations ‘taking into consideration current marketing campaigns and longer-term prospects for business with the countries concerned.’³⁴ While the DESO invitations are sent to those at ministerial or chief of staff level, Spearhead produces an additional list of invitees comprising military and government personnel below that level as well as industrial visitors. These invitations are ‘extended to reflect the requirements made by exhibitors as well as London based embassies, in consultation with United Kingdom defence attaches based overseas.’³⁵ Perhaps surprisingly, the government has stated that it cannot restrict the countries from which Spearhead can invite visitors.³⁶

The interests of delegations are identified well in advance and each delegation receives a programme for their visit, arranged in co-ordination with the exhibitors.³⁷ Appendix 1 lists the countries that were invited in 2003 by either the UK government or Spearhead.

Visitors

And in addition to the official delegations there are the 20,000 visitors who must register in advance and then pass a security check to confirm their credentials. Visitors must fit in to one of the following descriptions:

- ‘Defence & military aerospace industrialists

There is little information available about these attendees except that, of the international visitors to the previous DSEi, half came from Western Europe, around a quarter from the US, 10% from Asia/Australasia, 7% from the Middle East, 5% from Africa and 4% from Eastern Europe.

Arming the world’s conflicts

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute lists 18 ‘major armed conflicts’ underway in 2003.³⁹ Governments involved in 12 of these received official invitations to attend DSEi that year. In 2005, most of those conflicts are still going on, and although the official invitation lists will not be available until just before the event, there is nothing to suggest that countries that have been invited in the past will be left out this time.

Current conflicts involving governments which have been invited to DSEi in the past while those conflicts were going on, include:

Colombia

Colombia continues to be embroiled in civil war between the government and paramilitaries on one side, and guerrilla groups (FARC and ELN) on the other. The conflict forcibly displaced 287,000 civilians in 2004 alone.⁴⁰ The official armed forces have been

responsible for numerous killings, 'disappearances', arbitrary detention and torture, and also have documented and substantial links to the paramilitary forces who are responsible for more than 70% of political killings.⁴¹ These include the murder of trade unionists and peace and human rights activists. Nonetheless, President Uribe remains a UK ally, and Colombia always receives an invitation to DSEi.

Russia and Chechnya

As the USSR disintegrated in 1991, Chechnya, like many states which have since been internationally recognised, declared independence. In 1994, Russia invaded, and fought a war against the Chechen resistance until 1996. Russia effectively lost this war, although at the cost of at least 35,000 Chechen civilian lives.⁴² The current conflict started in 1999, and has been characterised by serious human rights abuses. The Russian Army had been responsible for widespread summary executions and 'disappearances', and the use of torture and rape.⁴³ In addition, Grozny, Chechnya's capital, has been destroyed, and there are now hundreds of thousands of Chechen refugees. President Putin has sought to portray the conflict as part of the 'war on terror', and there has been little criticism of it internationally. It perhaps isn't surprising, then, that Russian delegations have been invited to shop for weapons to pursue their war at all three DSEi exhibitions.

The occupation of Iraq

In 2003, troops from the US, UK and Australia invaded Iraq, overthrowing the regime of Saddam Hussein and installing Paul Bremer as head of the 'Coalition Provisional Authority'. After a year of occupation, pressure from Iraqis forced the US and its allies to change tack and effect a token handover of power to an Iraqi government headed by Iyad Allawi in June 2004. Even after another change of government following elections in January 2005, the armed forces of the US, UK and a number of minor partners remain.

In seeking to crush the armed resistance to their occupation, the US has virtually destroyed several cities, including Fallujah in November 2004. Estimates of civilians killed as a result of the invasion and occupation range from 25,000,⁴⁴ to a figure of over 100,000 according to a report published in the medical journal *The Lancet*.⁴⁵ Virtually all the arms and equipment used by the US and UK in the invasion and occupation were supplied by companies who will be at DSEi this year, including Northrup

Grumman, BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics.

Israel's occupation of Palestine

Israel's military occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza during the past 38 years has fuelled a conflict in which thousands have been killed. In addition to numerous extra-judicial killings, house demolitions and collective punishments meted out by the Israeli Army, the Palestinian economy has been effectively strangled, and Israel continues to build its 'security fence'. This is a massive wall which runs through the West Bank cutting farmers off from their land and children from their schools. The wall has been ruled illegal under international law by the International Courts of Justice in the Hague, and of course for years Israel has been in breach of UN resolutions calling for it to withdraw from the occupied territories.

The Israel pavilion at DSEi 2005 will be organised by Sibat, the arms export department of Israel's Ministry of Defence. It will include major Israeli arms companies Elbit, Rafael and Israel Aircraft Industries, as well as many smaller firms. An official delegation is hardly necessary, but there will no doubt be one.

In addition to actual conflicts, there are areas where armed conflict remains a significant possibility. These include:

India and Pakistan

India and Pakistan have been hostile to each other since the two states gained their independence. There have been frequent border clashes over the disputed territory of Kashmir for many years, and in 2002 the tension came to the brink of war several times, with massive troop movements towards the border. Yet both countries were invited to DSEi as usual the following year. The UK continues to arm both sides in this simmering conflict; it has just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Pakistan over 'defence collaboration', and secured a deal with India to buy 66 Hawk fighter/trainer jets from BAE Systems in 2003.⁴⁶ In 2004, the UK government licensed arms exports to India worth £352 million, and to Pakistan worth £40 million.⁴⁷

China and Taiwan

In addition to extensive human rights abuses in China, its massive military remains a threat to neighbouring populations, not least in Taiwan.

Although it has not been under the control of the Chinese authorities since 1949, Taiwan is still considered by Beijing to be part of China. In March this year, China passed the Taiwan Secession Law, authorising itself to use force should Taiwan declare formal independence. At the same time, the National People's Congress voted to increase military spending by 13%.⁴⁸ An invasion of Taiwan will not be undertaken lightly while the US remains Taiwan's protector, but an arms race has been escalating across the Taiwan Strait for years.

Two Chinese companies are exhibiting at DSEi 2005, and another official delegation is likely. An EU embargo on China has been in place since 1989, but the terms of the embargo were left to the interpretation of the individual EU member states. The major arms producers have interpreted them very loosely; more than £100 million worth of licences for the export of military equipment to China were issued by the UK government in 2004.

Supporting governments which abuse human rights

Human rights abuses are widespread around the world and the sale of military equipment is a key factor in them in a number of ways: arms can be used to carry out human rights abuses; all arms sales increase the military authority of abusing governments; and all sales convey a message of international acceptance and approval to the recipient government.

Given that the arms fair is an official UK government event, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)'s Human Rights Annual Report 2005⁴⁹ is perhaps an instructive place to start. It might be expected that countries singled out by the FCO for concern over human rights would not be invited to participate in an arms fair in the UK. But, of course, they are. The twenty countries considered in detail in the Report include Afghanistan, China, Colombia, Israel, Russia and Saudi Arabia, all invited to DSEi in 2003 (and Indonesia, which was invited in 1999).

Of these, human rights violations by **Colombia**, **Israel** and **Russia** have been considered above in the context of conflicts in which they are involved. As for the others:

Afghanistan continues to suffer from serious instability. Human Rights Watch reports that warlords and the remaining Taliban forces routinely abuse

human rights (especially the rights of women and girls), and that US forces operating against the Taliban continue to generate 'numerous claims of human rights abuses against the civilian population, including arbitrary arrests, use of excessive force, and mistreatment of detainees...'.⁵⁰

China – The Tianamen Square massacre in 1989 brought China's human rights abuses to the world's front pages. While China has made progress since that low-point, it remains a highly repressive state. Amnesty International reports: widespread imprisonment in violation of people's fundamental human rights and the risk of torture or ill-treatment; thousands continue to be sentenced to death or executed; the global 'war on terrorism' is being used to crackdown on the Uighur community in Xinjiang; and freedom of expression and religion continues to be severely restricted in Tibet.⁵¹ Fifteen years on from Tianamen Square, public commemoration of the events is forbidden and there is police harassment and detention of those trying to secure rehabilitation of victims, compensation, or reconsideration of the official verdict.⁵²

Indonesia's human rights record is appalling. Up to a million people were killed in a few months after Suharto took over in 1965, and in the late 1970s the Indonesian military was responsible for the deaths of around 200,000 people following its invasion of East Timor. Before, during and after the 1999 independence referendum in East Timor, the army orchestrated a campaign of violence against the civilian population which included the killing of hundreds of independence supporters. Abuses have taken place in West Papua since Indonesia started military operations there in 1963 and also in Aceh since the late 1980s. The 2003 military offensive against Aceh (which included the use of UK-supplied aircraft, tanks and armoured personnel carriers) resulted in gross violations of human rights with at least 2,000 people, the majority civilians, being killed.⁵³ And despite the devastation of the December 2004 tsunami, abuses have continued unabated. Amnesty International stating that 'extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, torture, sexual violence and destruction of property continued to be reported'.⁵⁴ The Indonesian military remain a powerful, even, according to Human Rights Watch, resurgent,⁵⁵ force in the country and appear to be able to act with impunity.

Saudi Arabia is, according to Amnesty International, in a 'dire' human rights situation.⁵⁶ There has been an escalation of killings by both

security forces and armed groups and the status of hundreds of prisoners of conscience remains shrouded in secrecy. Human Rights Watch states that the government has carried out a campaign of harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders, and that Saudi women continue to face serious obstacles to their participation in the economy, politics, media and society.⁵⁷

There will be many other governments with poor human rights records at DSEi including: the US, which has detained around 50,000 people since the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, detainees being routinely denied access to lawyers and families; Nigeria where excessive force has been used by Nigerian security forces in the Niger Delta, with many hundreds killed; the Philippines, where extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances' have been reported during military operations; and Pakistan, where the 'war of terror' has provided the pretext for arbitrary arrests.⁵⁸

Countries with major development needs

Arms sales can have two main negative effects on sustainable development. Firstly, and obviously, money spent on arms is not then spent on health, education, or other vital social services. Secondly, the sales can affect development through the conflicts they sustain or even provoke. The physical ability of authorities to deliver public services, whether vaccination or primary education, is severely impeded by conflict. Similarly, economic security is virtually impossible in a conflict zone. Civilians are often forced to flee their homes, reducing their living standards dramatically and often making them dependent on an overstretched state.

There was much talk about poverty reduction at the 2005 G8 summit, but arms sales received barely a mention. Perhaps this is not surprising given the way in which the G8 countries dominate the arms export trade; only one of the G8 countries is outside the list of the top ten arms exporters, and their governments invest massive resources into aggressively marketing arms to the global south.⁵⁹ DSEi is an important part of that process.

Human Development

The United Nations Human Development Index ranks 177 countries on a single scale based on three major factors: life expectancy, average income measured by

GDP, and enrolment in education.⁶⁰ Of the countries in the bottom third of this ranking, that is countries with a combination of low income per head, low life expectancy and low levels of education, twelve were invited to DSEi in 2003; Angola, Tanzania, Nigeria, Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, Botswana, India, Morocco, Egypt and South Africa. A further four, Yemen, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Namibia have been officially invited in recent years.⁶¹

Of these sixteen countries, only Morocco is not currently receiving international aid from the UK's Department for International Development.⁶² This aid is generally targeted at specific programmes, such as AIDS eradication (a particularly acute problem in southern Africa), literacy, healthcare, gender equality or the provision of clean running water. In all cases, the government concerned is presumably not able to tackle these problems from its existing budget. Yet an invitation to DSEi is an invitation to spend this already tight budget on expensive weapons and military equipment.

Pakistan is a case in point. The United Nations ranks it 142nd in the Human Development Index (HDI), and says it has 'low human development'. This is hardly a surprise when you consider that its military dictatorship spends more on the military than on health and education combined.⁶³ Tanzania, which is number 162 in the HDI, has also been a target for UK arms sales in the past few years with the active support of Tony Blair.⁶⁴

The lengths to which companies and arms exporting governments go to generate arms sales make a nonsense of the traditional justification for arms exports; that they meet 'legitimate defence needs'. In addition, the arms trade is probably the most corrupt trade in the world, with bribes from arms companies inflating the size and cost of arms orders.⁶⁵ While this is true for the arms trade as a whole, the resultant distortion in government spending affects poorer countries disproportionately because they have less room for financial manoeuvre.

By promoting arms to countries which rank so low on the HDI, the UK government not only undermines its stated aims of reducing global poverty but actually risks increasing poverty by provoking and sustaining conflict.

By-passing arms controls

The arms fair circuit, and DSEi as an important part of it, exists to make money for arms companies, and

that means selling to whoever is able to buy. This is the mind-set of arms fairs and those who organise them. There may be some official restrictions in the country hosting the arms fair – for instance, the UK government restricts the sale of some arms from the UK as a result of UN or EU arms embargoes or because of the risk of embarrassment – but these are very much token controls. They have little impact on the global arms market or the business activities at DSEi.

Most obviously, any formal arms controls are rendered meaningless by the thousands of sellers and buyers that come from around the globe. They are completely outside UK laws as soon as DSEi has finished for the year and have left the country. In addition to this, there are a number of arrangements and issues that effectively by-pass any country's official controls. These include:

- **the production of arms under licence.** A delegation or visitor at DSEi might decide that they want to produce a UK company's arms in their country for their own armed forces and for export to third/fourth/fifth countries. The UK government is likely to have little or no control over these exports, nor does it seem they want any.
- **diversion:** many weapons are purchased by one country and sold on to another. There appears to be little concern or interest in this issue on the part

of arms-exporting countries. The UK has no formal mechanism for monitoring the end-use of weapons once they have been exported.

- **illegal weapons start as legal weapons.** There are many attempts by government and the arms industry to make the official, legal arms trade sound respectable and to focus concern instead on the 'black' market. But the division is not anything like so clear cut. Legal weapons can go through many hands and find their way to countries that are supposedly under embargoes or to criminal activity in virtually any country (including the country of origin).

DSEi exists to promote arms sales around the world regardless of the consequences for those on the receiving end. Weapons are marketed directly to official delegations from countries in conflict and governments that abuse human rights. Where there is no official delegation, there are thousands of trade, government and armed forces visitors who can arrange deals. Where token UK government restrictions on arms sales exist, they can be avoided. UK policy, as for most governments, is to facilitate, not restrict, the arms trade, and the sale of DSEi-marketed arms to countries in conflict and human rights abusers receives full government support. It is just part of the business.

DSEi and the arms fair circuit

Defence Systems and Equipment International is just one stop on a constant global circuit of arms fairs. Most of these happen biennially, and over the course of two years there are more than thirty major arms fairs as well as numerous minor ones. The twenty largest are shown in the map on pages 22-23. A large arms company might be coming to DSEi following trips to the massive IDEX in the United Arab Emirates in February, Latin American Aero and Defence in April and the Paris Airshow in June. In October, a trip to the Association of the US Army exhibition and conference in Washington DC to secure a US contract might follow DSEi. The new year might then see a visit to Reed Exhibitions' combined Asian Aerospace and Asian Defense Technology arms fairs in Singapore.

These are just a few of the largest fairs, which vary from 'tri-service' arms fairs, meaning they exhibit weaponry and equipment for land, sea and air armed forces (DSEi is one of these), to aerospace exhibitions, naval exhibitions and other specialist arms fairs. Of dedicated military events, DSEi is possibly the world's largest, with only France's Eurosatory to compete with in terms of size and importance. However, some of the bigger aerospace exhibitions such as Farnborough International and the Paris Airshow boast more exhibitors due to the additional presence of civilian aerospace companies.

Since most aerospace companies produce for both civil and military markets, and many products are dual-use, it makes sense from the industry's perspective not to make a distinction between their civil and military marketing efforts. This type of exhibition can also perform a public relations role for the arms industry, incorporating 'public days' and aerobatic shows into the event.

Naval-only fairs include Gulf Maritime in the UAE, EuroNaval in Paris and ExpoNaval Chile. Milipol Paris is the largest of the 'internal security' fairs, whilst SOFEX in Jordan is the established arms fair relating to Special Forces. Spearhead Exhibitions organise the smaller and specialist Helitech every two years in Duxford near Cambridge, which focuses just on Helicopters; a similar exhibition also takes place in Italy. The recent enthusiasm for Unmanned Aerial

Vehicles in the arms industry has also produced some small specialist arms fairs.

Doing the circuit

Unsurprisingly, since it is held in the UK, DSEi attracts more UK companies than arms fairs held overseas, including smaller ones which make components or software for military equipment, for instance. However, the arms trade is a global phenomenon, and to succeed, many companies know they have to make the effort to attend a whole series of fairs on the circuit. This is because arms fairs are integral to the way the global arms industry does its business.

The floor plan of any large arms fair bears this out. While the global giants often have a large stand of their own, others gather under a national pavilion or display area, organised either by the trade association of their country's arms industry, or by the arms sales promotion department of their national government. These organisations realise that arms fairs are an important part of the access by arms companies to the global market, and they act accordingly. For instance, Israel's three state-owned arms companies and numerous private ones can often be found in the area organised by Sibat, the arms sales section of the Israeli Ministry of Defence.⁶⁶

The UK government's Defence Export Services Organisation not only helps organise DSEi, but can be found 'represent[ing] the Ministry of Defence in support of the UK Defence Industry' at arms fairs around the world.⁶⁷ In 2004 alone, DESO spent over £1 million on its attendance at thirteen overseas arms fairs (see Table 1). It often collaborates with the Defence Manufacturers Association (DMA), the UK trade association for military industry, in facilitating the presence of UK companies at international arms fairs.

The UK's Defence Procurement minister is also a regular visitor to international arms fairs, including Defendory and SOFEX in 2004, and Aero India in 2005.⁶⁸ He has been joined by Prince Andrew, the international representative for UK Trade and Investment, whose visit to SOFEX 2002 was widely

Table 1. International arms fairs attended by DESO in 2004⁷⁷

Country	Exhibition	Cost
Australia	Pacific 2004	£35,000
India	Def Expo	£271,000
Singapore	Asian Aero	£48,000
Chile	FIDAE	£65,000
Malaysia	Defence Services Asia	£46,000
Jordan	SOFEX	£183,000
Sweden	CBW	£42,000
South Africa	Africa Aerospace and Defence	£107,000
Greece	Defendory	£45,000
Japan	Japan Aerospace	£37,000
USA	AUSA	£128,000
Chile	ExpoNaval	£39,000
EEZ area	Gulf Maritime	£3,000
	Total	£1,049,000

reported in the British press when he bumped into the Iraqi delegation.⁶⁹

Boosting arms exports

Just as the UK's Ministry of Defence plays a significant role in organising DSEi, all arms fairs are backed by the government of the country they are held in. From their perspective, an arms fair can give an important boost to a country's arms industry. This is evident from certain arms fairs which have been started only recently by countries trying to establish themselves in the international arms market.

Ukraine, for example, has by some estimates ranked among the top ten of arms exporting countries in recent years, but much of this volume of transfers has been down to exporting Soviet-era surplus to Russia. With Russia seeking to reduce its reliance on Ukraine, the latter has been trying to broaden its appeal, making munitions to NATO standards and selling

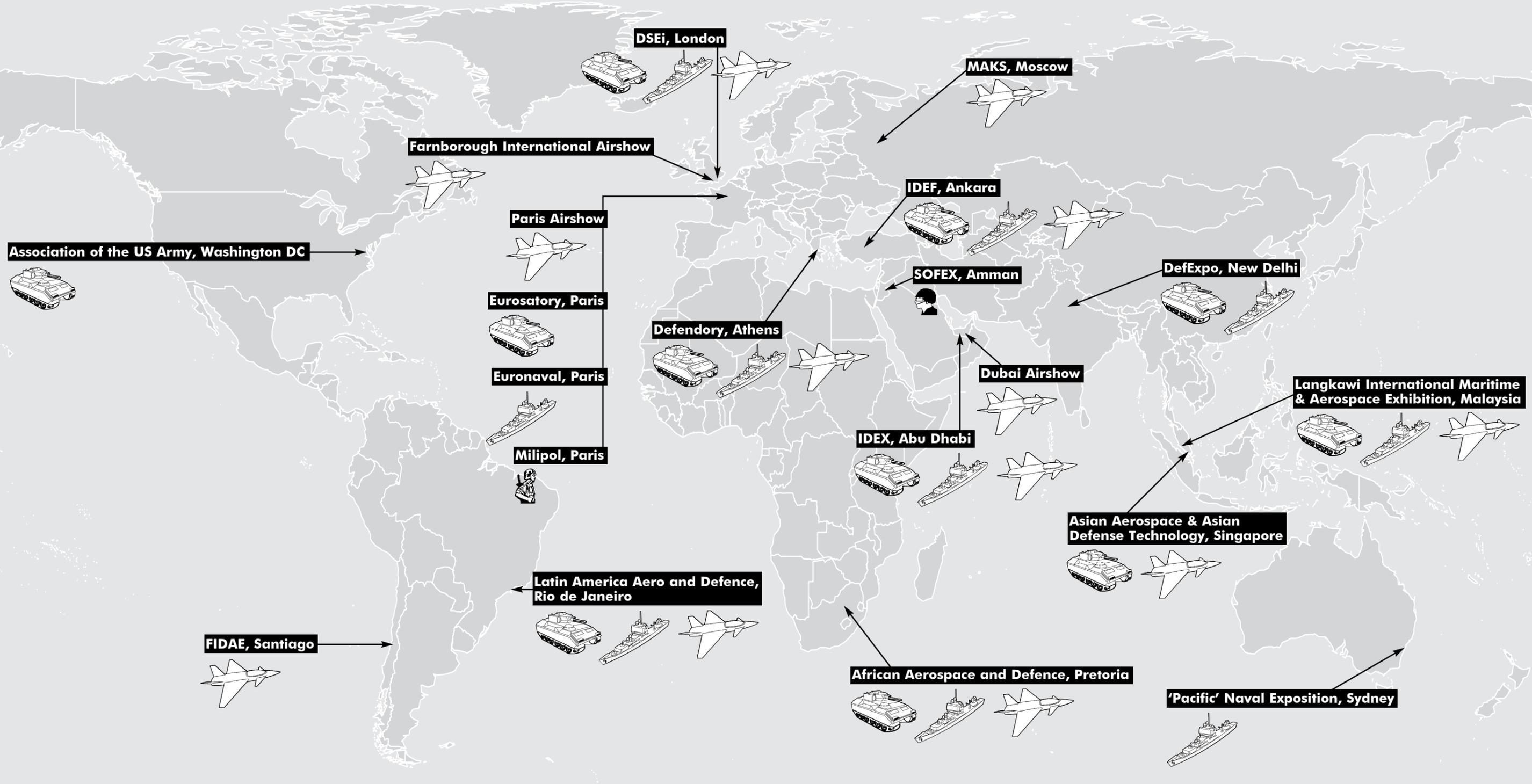
tanks to Pakistan.⁷⁰ Hence 'Arms and Security 2004', organised by the Ukrainian government in Kiev, and to be repeated in September 2005.

Other examples of this type of fair, which tend to be relatively small and organised entirely by the government rather than by a corporate partner, include Indonesia's 'Indo Defence', and Pakistan's 'International Defence Exhibition and Seminar' (IDEAS). The latter seems to have consciously marketed itself to countries which find it difficult to buy elsewhere: "Maybe Israel we wouldn't like to sell weapons to" was the only restriction the military regime considered when the arms fair was launched in 2000.⁷¹ Representatives attended IDEAS 2004 from such states as North Korea, Sudan and Burma.⁷²

Geopolitics and arms fairs

Geopolitical factors also play themselves out on the arms fairs circuit. Neither Greece nor Turkey is in the

The World's 20 largest arms fairs



Key Exhibiting arms for:

Land		Sea		Air	
Internal security/police		Special operations			

big league of arms producers, but they have traditionally been hostile towards each other, and both are in the top five arms importing countries.⁷³ Greece's 'Defendory' and Turkey's 'IDEF' are as much about facilitating their procurement process as promoting their indigenous arms industry. Defendory in particular may now have outgrown its origins and become an event of general importance to the global industry, but fairs with this purpose continue to be organised. Similarly, India's 'DefExpo' and Pakistan's IDEAS, both first organised in 2000, are undoubtedly part of the arms race in South Asia.

Brazil and South Africa are two countries vying for regional leadership in their continents. Both host arms fairs which promote themselves as gateways into the continent for global military industry. Rio De Janeiro's 'Latin America Aero and Defence' is actually organised by Reed Exhibitions Brazil, part of Reed Elsevier. At the same time, it is firmly backed by the Brazilian government, not least because it hopes that Brazilian aerospace company Embraer may soon regain its previously important position in the world market. However, the focus of the event is Latin America-wide.⁷⁴

Africa Aerospace and Defence, meanwhile, takes place in Pretoria. Although it is the relatively more wealthy South African National Defence Force that inevitably remains the biggest target for arms company sales, the publicity for AAD 2006 tells us that 'this exhibition is the ideal opportunity to gain [a] foothold into this vast continent.'⁷⁵

International big business

While governments may have a variety of concerns in mind when supporting or organising an arms fair, for the companies involved it is just a matter of maximising their opportunities to sell weaponry. Even an apparent exception, the virtual boycott of the 2003 Paris Air Show by US companies over France's opposition to the war against Iraq, was not quite as it seemed. US arms companies are dependent on the the Pentagon's procurement and Foreign Military Sales programme. It was this, rather than any national loyalty, which prompted them to go along with the White House line.

The organisers of arms fairs attract their exhibitors by sheer number of visitors (and therefore potential buyers), and by the quantity and quality of invited delegations (more senior officials being better 'quality'). Delegations from big 'markets' are the best attraction, in other words, those that spend most on the military. These tend to fall into two categories; wealthy countries, or those engaged in arms races or internal repression.

Globally, the arms trade was worth around \$40 billion in 2003.⁷⁶ The wheels of this trade are oiled by the constant round of arms fairs, which are not just a showcase to help companies to sell finished products, they also provide networking opportunities for the industry and the chance to negotiate future partnerships. In other words, they are a key mechanism for the diffusion of arms across the globe.

Conclusion

The 1,134 exhibitors, approximately 70 military delegations and 20,000 'visitors' will spend four days at DSEi carrying out the business of the international arms trade.

Most of the world's biggest arms companies will be present, exhibiting their aircraft, tanks, missiles and warships. They will be joined by a wide range of suppliers of components and sub-systems. Many other companies will be selling small arms, ammunition, radar, communications systems, body armour and so on. The companies turn out in force to obtain access to prospective customers, who are there in abundance. Countries in the midst of conflict, involved in arms races, with governments which abuse human rights, as well as countries with significant development needs, will all be invited to DSEi.

As DSEi is a business event for international arms companies and part of an international circuit of such exhibitions, the UK government's political and financial support for it is not only wholly unethical but also extremely questionable on economic grounds. Why would the government want to put taxpayers' money and ministers' time into supporting the global arms industry? However, backing for DSEi is just a natural extension of the government's ongoing, unquestioning support for the arms trade. This policy is not about economics or 'defence' or allies but about corporate influence and personal relationships.

Whatever justifications are presented by DSEi's promoters, arms are marketed and sold purely in the interest of arms companies and their shareholders and at the expense of human rights and human life.

Appendix 1 – countries invited to DSEi 2003

Region/ Country	Invited by UK government	Invited by Spearhead	Region/ Country	Invited by UK government	Invited by Spearhead
Africa			Vietnam	Yes	
Algeria	Yes	Yes	Australasia		
Angola		Yes	Australia	Yes	Yes
Botswana	Yes	Yes	New Zealand	Yes	Yes
Egypt	Yes	Yes	Middle East		
Ghana	Yes	Yes	Bahrain	Yes	Yes
Kenya	Yes	Yes	Israel		Yes
Morocco		Yes	Jordan	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	Yes	Yes	Kuwait	Yes	Yes
South Africa	Yes	Yes	Oman	Yes	Yes
Tanzania		Yes	Qatar	Yes	Yes
Tunisia		Yes	Saudi Arabia	Yes	Yes
Americas			Syria	Yes	Yes
Argentina		Yes	Turkey	Yes	Yes
Barbados		Yes	UAE	Yes	Yes
Brazil	Yes	Yes	Europe		
Canada	Yes	Yes	Austria	Yes	Yes
Chile	Yes	Yes	Belgium	Yes	Yes
Colombia	Yes	Yes	Bulgaria		Yes
Ecuador		Yes	Croatia		Yes
Jamaica		Yes	Czech Republic	Yes	Yes
Mexico	Yes	Yes	Denmark	Yes	Yes
Peru	Yes		Finland	Yes	Yes
Trinidad & Tobago	Yes		France	Yes	Yes
Uruguay		Yes	German	Yes	Yes
US	Yes	Yes	Greece	Yes	Yes
Venezuela	Yes	Yes	Hungary	Yes	Yes
Asia-Central & South			Ireland	Yes	Yes
Afghanistan		Yes	Italy	Yes	Yes
Bangladesh		Yes	Latvia		Yes
India	Yes	Yes	Lithuania		Yes
Kazakhstan	Yes	Yes	Luxembourg		Yes
Pakistan	Yes	Yes	Netherlands	Yes	Yes
Sri Lanka		Yes	Norway	Yes	Yes
Asia-East & South East			Poland	Yes	Yes
Brunei	Yes	Yes	Portugal	Yes	Yes
China	Yes	Yes	Romania	Yes	Yes
Japan	Yes	Yes	Russia	Yes	Yes
Malaysia	Yes	Yes	Slovakia	Yes	Yes
Philippines	Yes	Yes	Slovenia	Yes	Yes
Singapore	Yes	Yes	Spain	Yes	Yes
South Korea	Yes	Yes	Sweden	Yes	Yes
Thailand	Yes	Yes	Switzerland	Yes	Yes
			Ukraine		Yes

Appendix 2 – cross-sections of companies at DSEi 2005

The cross-section of companies attending and the types of military equipment being marketed at DSEi can be illustrated by considering the companies from a given country. Two examples are given here. Each company is listed with representative military equipment and an indicator of the level of military focus of the company (whether they entirely, mainly or partly produce equipment for the military).

South African companies at DSEi		
Company	Equipment	Military focus
AJ Charnaud & Company	Protective clothing and equipment	partly
Armscor	Provides services in the acquisition of products and services for defence communities around the world' (Armscor website)	entirely
Armscor Business t/a Protechnik	Testing of chemical protective materials and equipment, research into 'chemical and biological defence.'	mainly
Canvas & Tent	Canvas products and tents	partly
Cochrane Steel	Fencing products, razor wire, steel bar fencing, mobile barriers	partly
Cornwall Hill Industries	Traffic management equipment, cones, tapes, road signs, roadblocks	partly
Cornwall Hill Industries t/a Safety Xpress Stromberg	Traffic management equipment, cones, tapes, road signs, roadblocks	partly
Denel (<i>World's 80th largest arms producer</i>)	Artillery, aircraft electronics, military vehicles, missiles, small arms/ammunition	mainly
Fieldsware	Not known	not known
Fuchs Electronics	Electronic fuzing for mortar, artillery, naval and rocket systems	entirely
GCS	Internet service provider, wire and wireless	partly
Global Armour	Helmets, shields, body armour	entirely
Grintek Communication Systems	Telecommunications & military electronics	partly
Hermanus Magnetic Observatory	Geomagnetic research to support navigation	partly
Imperial Armour	Bulletproof vests, body armour, ballistic helmets	mainly

South African companies at DSEi (continued)

Company	Equipment	Military focus
Night Vision Optics	Optics, searchlight systems	partly
Reutech Defence Industry	Military communications systems	entirely
RDI communications	Military communications systems	entirely
Reutech Radar Systems	Radar technology, surveillance and tracking systems	mainly
Tellumat	Communication, radar and navigation systems	partly
Trade & Investment South Africa	Markets South African exports internationally <i>Part of the Department of Trade and Industry</i>	partly

Israeli companies at DSEi

Company	Equipment	Military focus
Aitech systems	Computer hardware, rugged computer systems	partly
Ashot Ashkelon Industries	Transmission systems and gear drives for heavy vehicles and jet and gas turbine engines	partly
Asine	Computer hardware products - embedded and rugged designs	partly
Elbit Systems (<i>World's 44th largest arms producer</i>)	Unmanned aerial vehicles, avionics, electronics and electro-optics systems as part of command and control systems	entirely
Elisra Group	Electronics, intelligence & communications systems, control systems, weapons systems	mainly
EORD	Electro-optics, acoustics & seismology, camouflage concealment & deception	mainly
Israel Aircraft Industries (<i>World's 33rd largest arms producer</i>)	A wide range of military equipment including missiles, electronics and air combat training systems.	mainly
ITL Optronics	Electro optical systems, vision & thermal imaging systems, laser range finders	entirely
Kinetics	Systems and components for armoured fighting vehicles	entirely
Mifram	Design, manufacture and building of industrial plants	partly

Israeli companies at DSEi (continued)

Company	Equipment	Military focus
Milper	Computer hardware, rugged computer systems	mainly
M-Systems	Secure data storage	partly
Netline Communications Technologies	Detection and jamming of wireless communication	mainly
Plasan Sasa	Add on armour for armoured vehicles and aircraft	mainly
Rafael (<i>World's 51st largest arms producer</i>)	Weapon systems including air-to-air missiles, electronic warfare systems, radar and communications	mainly
Ricor Cryogenic & Vacuum Systems	Cooling systems for sensors	partly
Shoshana Metal Work Factories	Folding stretchers	entirely
SIBAT	<i>Foreign Defense Assistance and Defense Export Department of the Israeli Ministry of Defense</i>	entirely
Sir Dicks Uniform	Not known	not known
Soltam Systems	Small arms, artillery, mortars, ammunition	entirely
Tadiran Communications	Military communication systems	entirely
TAR Ideal	Sale and distribution of weapons, ammunition, vehicles, armour, protective clothing, training etc.	entirely
Visual Defence	Security oriented communications systems	partly

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