Israel Aerospace Industries is one of Israel's biggest arms companies. Founded in 1953 as Bedek, IAI has long been at the forefront of Israel's arms production and export. It also develops systems for commercial aircraft. In 2013, 73% of IAI's sales revenues came from exports.

IAI and Israel's drone wars

IAI was one of the earliest developers of drone technology and launched its first surveillance drone, the IAI Scout, in 1979. Since then the company has launched a number of drone models (see below). Drone development is handled by IAI's MALAT divisions. IAI writes on its website of its drones' “unsurpassed track record of over 1,200,000 operational flight hours for over 50 users on five continents”. According to Drone Wars UK, IAI has exported their UAVs, sometimes through joint venture agreements, to various European countries as well as South America, Australia, Canada and India and the company has a growing market in Africa.

IAI and Gaza

Most of IAI's unmanned aerial vehicle (UAVs) are surveillance drones, but the Heron 1 and
Heron TP both have strike capabilities and have been used in Gaza. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), the Heron can fly up to 40 hours and can carry four Spike missiles. It is also used for surveillance and to identify targets on the ground.

Drone Wars UK reports that Israel was deploying armed Heron 1 drones during the Operation Summer Rains attack in Gaza in 2006.

The IAI Heron TP is Israel's biggest drone, with a wing span of 26 metres. It was first used during Operation Cast Lead in Gaza during 2008-2009. When the Heron TP is marketed as 'combat proven' it means that it has been tried out on the people of Gaza with fatal consequences.

**Attacks on Lebanon:**

IAI's Searcher and Scout drones were both used for surveillance in Israel's attacks on Lebanon in the 1990s and early 2000s. It is believed that armed Heron drones were used in the assault on Lebanon in 2006.

**IAI and the US:**

During the first Gulf War, IAI Pioneer drones were used by the US navy to guide shells fired from battleships.

**Industry:**

A 'defence' company which develops and produces a variety of products for both military and commercial markets in Israel and around the world, including unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), fighter jets and naval and ground defence systems. In 2013, military equipment accounted for 73% of the company's sales, with only 27% going to commercial markets.

**Traded on:** TASE

**Revenues/Assets/Sales:** In 2013 the company reported an operating income of $84 million, the company recorded total assets of over $5 billion and net sales of over $3.5 billion - to view the company accounts click here.

**Employees:** 16,000

**Subsidiaries:**

ELTA Systems Ltd (Israel)

ELTA North America (based in Maryland, US)

European Advanced Technology (EAT)
Addresses:

Website: www.iai.co.il

Head quarters: Ben Gurion International Airport, 70100, Israel. Phone: 00972-3-9353111
Email: corpmkg@iai.co.il

Representatives: The company has representatives around the world, including in Asia, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Korea, North America and Russia.

Ownership: IAI is fully owned by the Israeli state. It is the largest state owned defence and aerospace company in Israel.

Drones manufactured by IAI:

IAI Scout, Bird Eye 400, Mini Panther, Mosquito 1, Mosquito 1.5, Panther, Harpy, Searcher I, I-View-150, Searcher II, Searcher III, B-Hunter, Heron 1 (Shoval), Heron TP (Eitan).

Countries IAI has exported to:

Angola, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, United States, UK.

Resistance:

In 2011 a Palestinian civil society call demanded a two way embargo on arms sales to and from the Israeli state and Israeli companies.

In October 2014, activists from London Palestine Action occupied the London offices of Airbus over its involvement with IAI. The two companies are working together on the Harfang drone for the French Air Force. The Harfang drone is based on the IAI Heron.

Background
The battlefields of Israel's militarism and occupation have proved effective testing grounds for new types of weaponry. Israel's constant state of warfare has ensured a reliable marketplace for Israeli arms manufacturers. According to Drone Wars UK, surveillance drones were first used in Egypt in the lead up to the Yom Kippur War. The first recorded use of an Israeli drone to help piloted warplanes bomb targets (target acquisition) was in 1982 in the run up to the Israeli invasion and occupation of Lebanon. According to the Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, the first recorded use of an armed drone by Israel was in 2004. The experience gleaned during years of military repression has made Israel the largest exporter of drone technology in the world. Israeli arms companies have sold drones to over 50 countries.

According to Human Rights Watch (HRW): "the missile fired from a drone has its own cameras that allow the operator to observe the target from the moment of firing. The optics on both the drone and missiles include imaging infrared cameras that allow operators to see individuals at night as well as during the day. With these visual capabilities, drone operators should have been able to tell the difference between fighters and others directly participating in hostilities, who are legitimate targets, and civilians, who are immune from attack, and to hold fire if that determination could not be made. If a last-second doubt arises about a target, the drone operator can use the missile's remote guidance system to divert the fired missile, steering the missile away from the target with a joystick."

Despite this, the number of deaths (as a proportion of total deaths) caused by drone strikes has been increasing. During our 2013 visit to Gaza, Corporate Watch interviewed several survivors of Israeli drone attacks who had not involved in any fighting before they were targeted, many of those killed by drone attacks are children. The Gaza based Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights provided Corporate Watch with these shocking figures for the years 2000-2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total recorded number of people killed by Israeli attacks in Gaza</th>
<th>Number of people killed by Israeli drones in Gaza (% of total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>2 (0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Casualties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>769</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Israeli drone strikes are carried out from the Palmachin and Tel Nof air force bases. xxii [10]

**Endnotes:**

i Human Rights Watch (2009), Section 4

ii Drone Wars UK (2014), page 10


iv Drone Wars UK (2014), page 10

v Drone Wars UK (2014), page 7

vi IAI - [http://www.iai.co.il/Shared/UserControls/Print/PopUp.aspx?lang=en&docid=45888] [12]

vii Drone Wars UK (2014), page 7

viii Drone Wars UK (2014), page 19

**Category(s):**
Arms Trade [13]
Palestine [14]
Technology [15]

Issue(s):
Gaza [16]
Drones [17]

Source URL: http://www.corporatewatch.org/company-profiles/israel-aerospace-industries

Links:
[7] mailto:corpmkg@iai.co.il