

After Israel Invades Nablus, Palestine Action Invades Israeli Drone Factory

by *Days of Palestine*, published on *Popular Resistance*, July 25, 2022

On Saturday night, Israeli military forces raided Nablus, armed with stun grenades and ammunition and killing two Palestinians and injuring 9 others. On Sunday, members of Palestine Action descended upon Israeli weapons company Elbit Systems' factory in Shenstone, smashing and striking at the site exterior, throwing red paint, a message to the Israeli occupation and those who uphold it – the day has passed where your violence will go unchecked, prepare to be met with resistance every step of the way. Activists took action seeking to dismantle an industry built on occupation, dispossession and warfare across the globe.

BREAKING: Palestine Action have descended upon drone factory UAV Engines LTD, wreaking havoc for Israel's largest weapons company, Elbit Systems #ShutElbitDown pic.twitter.com/RFjwbTn6HW

– Palestine Action (@Pal_action) July 24, 2022

A Palestine Action spokesperson said:

“Elbit drones are made in Britain, tested on Palestine then sold back to the British military, amongst others. The British military hold deep ties with Elbit – Britain is an accomplice in an international industry built on occupation, one where technology is suited not to meet human needs, but to further repression and terror. We can only cut these ties with direct action taken by the masses – ordinary people,

willing to make sacrifices in order to end our collective complicity.”

The site in question is UAV Engines LTD. and has faced extensive action in the past, owing to its manufacture of components used in Elbit military drones such as the Watchkeeper UAV. A direct action campaign for site closure has been fought for nearly two years under the #ShutElbitDown banner, and longer by activists taking sporadic action. It has been waged by dozens of activists who have faced arrest and loss of liberty, alongside mass support from locals who wish to see an end to a brutal industry that starts on our doorsteps. After huge successes for the broader campaign, its use of direct action and community organising culminating in the closure of two of Elbit's sites in London and Manchester, Palestine Action is working to permanently close UAV Engines LTD.

Elbit's clientele spans much of the world – its military goods are sold on and used for anything from violent repression en masse, to the surveillance of both sky and sea. For many years, the Hermes 450/900 drones have been a staple of life in Gaza. They hold a constant presence in the skies, made ever known by their distinct buzzing, the threat of bombing always lurking. As Elbit themselves have said, the drones are “battle-tested” on Palestine – inaugurated through testing on Palestine's captive populations, then sold back to militaries across the world.

Elbit drones are sold on to Israel in huge numbers (Elbit drones make up 85% of Israel's drone fleet) and used to keep entire populations living in fear, under permanent siege-mentality – 91% of children in Gaza suffering from PTSD. Today's action has been taken in their name, with a promise of resistance until victory – an end to Britain's complicity, and a Palestine free from the horrors of occupation and state terror.