



For attention :

First Minister and Economy Minister

10th November 2025

A chairde,

Invest NI Support for Companies Involved in the F35 Supply Chain

Role of Aldergrove during the Gaza Genocide

I am writing on behalf of The Bloody Sunday Trust (BST) to seek answers from the First Minister and the Economy Minister to questions on two specific issues related to the Executive's actions in response to the Gaza Genocide.

1 - F35 Components

Research undertaken by activist groups and seen by the BST presents a persuasive case that several firms funded by Invest NI have produced and may still be producing components that enter the supply chain for the production of the F-35 aircraft used by Israel to perpetrate genocide in Gaza.

Martin Butcher, Oxfam's policy advisor on arms and conflict, has stated unequivocally that the unique set up of the F-35 programme means it is "absolutely" the case that parts produced in the UK - including those produced in the North - end up in Israeli jets.

Although Invest NI has claimed that it “does not support projects that supply arms to Israel”, recently disclosed Departmental correspondence has confirmed that Invest NI defines "arms" only as finished weapons or munition.

Nonetheless following the publication of Invest NI’s **internal** review of its investments, the Economy Minister has asserted that,

“The review is categorical - Invest NI does not support the manufacture of **arms or their components** for Israel”.

However the report itself directly contradicts this claim when it states that it is not possible for Invest NI or its client companies to fully track or determine the final destination of exported goods once they enter complex supply chains.

In relation to this point the BST notes the following paras in the Terms of Reference for the internal INI review.

7. Legal

7.1. In undertaking the review, Invest NI shall rely upon the information provided by client companies and shall assume such information to be accurate, complete and not misleading. No independent verification or audit of such information shall be undertaken and Invest NI makes no representation or warranty, express or implied as to the accuracy or completeness of the information provided.

7.2. Invest NI shall take reasonable measures to preserve the confidentiality of any commercially sensitive information received from client companies. Where such information is contained within documents which are intended for wider circulation or which may enter the public domain, Invest NI shall redact the relevant information to protect its confidential nature.

7.3. For the purposes of this review, the scope of analysis shall be confined to direct exports to Israel, on the basis that is not reasonably

practical to track or attribute goods once they enter complex or multi-tiered supply chains.

These paragraphs severely constrain the scope of the review which is already questionable given the lack of any independent, external analysis.

The BST further notes that Madden & Finucane Solicitors are currently acting in Judicial Review proceedings against the Department for the Economy and Invest NI over funding companies directly involved in the F-35 supply chain.

According to Madden & Finucane,

“This case brings to light public funds ending up in the supply chain used to create and maintain F-35 fighter jets that may have been used by the IDF in Gaza. Our client has obtained information that shows Invest NI did not apply their own rules in the consideration and allocation of these public funds, effectively removing oversight from the Executive Committee. Our client seeks any unlawful funds to be clawed back and ongoing unlawful funds to be ended.”

In correspondence between arms manufacturer BAE Systems and Moyola in May 2021 under the heading, “BAE Systems-Air (Aircraft Business Units) Supplier Quality Approval Letter” it is stated clearly that the product to be supplied, “shall be in accordance with the BAE Systems F-35 Lightning II programme”.

BAE Systems has been part of the F-35 programme since its inception, “bringing decades of expertise into the development, manufacture, electronic warfare systems and sustainment of the world’s most advanced fighter jet”. Moyola received funding from Invest NI in 2023/24.

In its analysis of the INI Review, the campaign group Act Now makes the following points-

- F-35s are not mentioned in the whole review.

- The timescale considered by the Review is too narrow and excludes companies that Invest NI knew had F-35 related contracts.
- Invest NI has not addressed the key point in Act Now's report that public money may have supported the production costs for NI-based companies to supply components for the F-35 programme and/or helped them to enter into these supply chains.
- Ruling out that no public money had the purpose to support the manufacture of arms or components to Israel does not exclude the outcome that it did.

The BST accepts that the Economy Minister now requires companies seeking grant support to, "confirm that they are not manufacturing arms or components for countries committing genocide". This appears at first glance to be a decisive change in policy. However reliance is still being placed on INI assurances that firms receiving funding do not manufacture components for Israeli weapons and, at the same time, on the contradictory assertion that goods cannot be traced once they enter the supply chain.

Furthermore even accepting that a new approach has been adopted since October 2025 it remains the case that Invest NI has given around £20m to local companies that manufacture components for the F-35 aircraft.

Arising from this the BST seeks answers to the following three questions from the Economy Minister-

- i) Why were appropriate safeguards not in place prior to October 2025 to prevent any Invest NI funding directly or indirectly assisting Israel?

- ii) How can INI provide assurances that components do not end up in F-35 jets if these components cannot be traced once they enter complex supply chains?
- iii) What action will now be taken to clawback funding used to assist Israel that was provided in the absence of appropriate safeguards and due diligence ?

2 - Role of Aldergrove during the Gaza Genocide

As you will be aware the British RAF operates from an airfield at Aldergrove.

It is known that at least 60 military flights have used Aldergrove airport as a transit point during the Gaza genocide. Over a dozen of these flights were found to have travelled to Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar - a key transfer point for large-scale munitions between the US and Israel.

Based on the available evidence it is feasible that components manufactured by companies in the North of Ireland are used to build the F-35s that are bombing civilians in Gaza. Equally it may be the case that targets are selected using intelligence and logistical support provided by the British military at Aldergrove.

Earlier this year Belfast City Council passed a motion resolving to write to, "the Stormont Executive, the Westminster Government, and management of Aldergrove Airport to express its disgust at this complicity."

The BST would appreciate an update from the First Minister on the action taken by the Executive on receipt of this letter together with details of any further representations made to the British government on this issue by the Executive.

Finally, in her report, From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide, the UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese recommends that all sectors should -

promptly cease all business activities and terminate relationships directly linked with, contributing to and causing human rights violations and international crimes against the Palestinian people, in accordance with international corporate responsibilities and the law of self-determination,

Can the First Minister detail the specific actions that are now being taken by the Executive to implement this recommendation?

I look forward to your early response.

Le dea-ghuí

Tony Doherty
Chairperson
Bloody Sunday Trust