

A GUIDE TO
COMPLICITY
AND PROTEST

NO
GENOCIDE
PAVILION
AT
THE
VENICE
BIENNALE

Boycott the Genocide Pavilion

SHUT IT DOWN

NO VISITORS | NO PRESS | NO PARTIES
NO DEATH IN VENICE | NO BUSINESS AS USUAL



Boycott the Genocide Pavilion. Shut It Down.

As arts workers, we refuse the presence of a genocidal apartheid state on the cultural world stage of the 60th Venice Biennale. To accept the inclusion of the Israeli pavilion is to accept genocide, to normalise the ongoing decimation of an entire population, to deny human rights, to create a precedent for justifying totalitarianism.

The world's highest court, the International Court of Justice, affirmed that Israel is plausibly committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. The ICJ issued interim measures warning Israel to cease any acts of genocide in Gaza. Israel's decades-long assault on Gaza continues regardless, while its leaders proclaim they are above international law and boldly advertise their genocidal intent.

Leading international, Palestinian, and Israeli human rights organisations have long argued that Israel's occupation of Palestine, of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip – deemed illegal by the UN Resolution 242 of November 1967 – constitutes, together with its treatment of Palestinians inside 1948 borders, a cruel system of apartheid and a crime against humanity.

We demand the boycott of the Israeli pavilion. We demand the Biennale shut it down. We demand a permanent ceasefire, an end to the genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, and an end to the apartheid and occupation of Palestine.

About the Genocide Pavilion

Israel's artistic team presents *(M)otherland*, a so-called "fertility pavilion" reflecting on motherhood. Meanwhile, Israel has murdered more than 13,000 children and destroyed access to reproductive care and medical facilities across Gaza. As a result, Palestinian women have C-sections without anaesthetic and give birth in the street.

The Israeli pavilion's curators and artist issued a simplistic statement about the necessity of art in dark times, insisting on a "pocket for free expression and creation amidst everything that's happening". There is no free expression for the Palestinian poets, artists, and writers murdered, silenced, imprisoned, tortured, and prevented from travelling abroad or internally by Israel. There is no free expression in the Palestinian theatres and literary festivals shut down by Israel. There is no free expression in the museums, archives, publications, libraries, universities, schools, and homes of Gaza bombed to rubble by Israel. There is no free expression in the war crime of cultural genocide.

The Venice Biennale: complicit in genocide

The Biennale has been silent about Israel's atrocities against Palestinians, despite Israel's assault on Gaza constituting one of the most intense bombardments in history. By the end of October 2023, Israel had already fired tonnes of explosives on Gaza equal in force to the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

Pietrangelo Buttafuoco was nominated as the new president of the Venice Biennale in November 2023. Buttafuoco was the former leader of the youth wing of the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (Movimento Sociale Italiano or MSI) party, before working as a journalist for rightwing magazines and Il Secolo d'Italia.

internationale des peintres antifascistes, which also produced collective murals denouncing Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile.

IT Italy: Following the uprisings of May 1968 in France, Venice Fine Arts Academy students hung a banner across its main entrance that read: "Venice is infected with capitalism and even the Biennale is a hostage." In solidarity with protests in France, artists and allies took to the Biennale to express opposition to rising commercial interests in the Arsenale main exhibition, and to national pavilions whose state-sponsored projects were seen as antithetical to freedom of expression. In addition to protests around the city, protestors occupied national pavilions in the Giardini. They turned artworks to face the walls and covered them with banners protesting the Vietnam War and apartheid in South Africa. A heavy police presence was put in place throughout the Biennale. Some representatives of national pavilions – such as France, Norway, and the Netherlands – suggested closing to protest excessive enforcement and surveillance. Ultimately, the French, Nordic, Soviet, and Japanese pavilions were closed at the postponed opening held in June that year.

CH Chile: In 1973, a US-backed military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet overthrew the democratically elected Chilean government of Salvador Allende. The news shocked the entire world. Allende was killed in the attack and during the remaining three months of 1973, Pinochet's forces killed an estimated 1,260 Chileans. According to official figures, by 1990, the regime had left a toll of 40,175 victims of torture, executions, detentions, and disappearances. The 1974 Biennale responded to the coup by naming that year's exhibition "Freedom for Chile". It was a highly politicised event. Venues spread across Venice and into neighbouring towns. It opened at Palazzo Ducale with a packed conference titled "Testimonianza contro il fascismo" (Bearing Witness against Fascism) with Hortensia Allende, the president's widow, in attendance. The Central Pavilion hosted an exhibition of political posters (1970-1973), and the streets of Venice were filled with acts of solidarity.

formed the basis of the Tel Aviv Museum's permanent collection, and enabled Israel to position itself as an international artworld player. After Guggenheim's death, the Palazzo became a public museum operated by the Solomon R Guggenheim Foundation. In the run-up to the 2015 Biennale, it was revealed that the Foundation's plans to build an Abu Dhabi outpost had led to the exploitation of migrant workers. During the opening, Biennale participants Gulf Labor Coalition in collaboration with GULF (Gulf Ultra Luxury Faction), and Italian organisations S.a.L.E. Docks in Venice and Macao from Milan, protested for migrant workers' rights outside the Collection and forced its temporarily closure. In August 2015, Gulf Labor and GULF sprayed a 'Handala' in the Arsenale and occupied the Israeli Pavilion to highlight parallels between the struggles of Palestinian and migrant workers. Created by Najji al-Ali while living as a stateless migrant in the Gulf, Handala is an iconic symbol of Palestinian resistance. It depicts a 10-year-old boy turning his back on a world without justice, one in which workers are made stateless in their own land, and forced to build Israeli settlements, homes, and military establishments. That same year, On Vacation – a Ukrainian art collective founded by the Izolyatsia Center for Cultural Initiatives – occupied the Israeli pavilion, along with the pavilions of occupying powers Russia and the US.

LB Lebanon: The 1976 Tal Al-Za'tar Massacre took place after a 7-month armed siege of the Tal Al-Za'tar refugee camp housing over 50,000 Palestinian and Lebanese refugees in north-eastern Beirut. Parties affiliated with the Lebanese Front, consisting of right-wing Lebanese Christian militias and their Syrian allies, besieged the camp as part of a wider campaign to expel Palestinians from northern Beirut. The siege ended after 52 days of full-scale military assault, when at least 1,500 inhabitants of the camp were massacred. Surviving residents were forced to flee. That same year, the Biennale invited three collectives – the Collectif de peintres des pays arabes, L'Arcicoda, and the Collectif de peintres antifascistes – who staged an action in solidarity with those still under siege at Tal Al-Za'tar. The groups created a large-scale public painting intervention at Piazza Ferretto in Mestre, covering a huge canvas with a stencil drawing of the face of a young boy who was injured in shelling. The public was invited to participate until the surface was entirely covered. In the following months, they took the action to plazas in towns in Tuscany. This solidarity action included collaborations with Italian workers' unions and the Brigade

Information about the genocide

Every hour in Gaza:

- 15 people are killed (6 are children)
- 35 people are injured
- 42 bombs are dropped
- 12 buildings are destroyed

The following are the official casualty figures as of 7 April 2024. The Gaza Health Ministry estimates thousands of dead remain unreported or buried under the rubble, with the morgue monitoring system now effectively collapsed due to the relentless Israeli attacks on Gaza's major hospitals.

Gaza

- Killed: 33,175+ people, including 13,000+ children
- Injured: 75,886+ people, including 8,663+ children
- Missing: 8,000+
- Children orphaned or separated from their parents: 17,000+

Occupied West Bank

- Killed: 459+ people, including 116+ children
- Injured: 4,750+

Famine

Famine is imminent as 1.1m people – half of Gaza – experience catastrophic food insecurity.

North Gaza and Gaza Governorates are classified in IPC Phase 5 (Famine) with reasonable evidence, with 70% (around 210,000 people) of the population in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe). Famine is imminent in the northern governorates and projected to occur anytime between mid-March and May 2024.

The southern governorates of Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis, and the Governorate of Rafah, are classified in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). However, in a worst-case scenario, these governorates face a risk of Famine through July 2024.

The entire population in the Gaza Strip (2.23m) is facing high levels of acute food insecurity.

The current situation will have long-term effects on the lives and health of thousands. Right now, children are dying from the combined effects of malnutrition and disease.

Devastation across Gaza

According to the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Health Organization and the Palestinian government, as of March 28, Israeli attacks have damaged:

- More than half of Gaza's homes (360,000 residential units have been destroyed or damaged)
- 396 educational facilities
- 10 out of 35 hospitals are partially functioning
- 83% of groundwater wells not operational
- 267 places of worship
- 85% of Gaza's population is internally displaced

Sources:

Al Jazeera, ArtNet, the Canary, DPA, Disclose, France24, Guardian, IE Med, The Intercept, IPC, Le Monde, Middle East Eye, Middle East Monitor, Reuters, Sky News, UN, UNICEF.

Visit anga.live/press for source links and more info.

A history of Biennale protest

SA South Africa: From 1950-68, due to widespread global condemnation and calls for boycott, apartheid South Africa was discouraged from exhibiting and sidelined when the Biennale allocated spaces. An official ban was put in place in 1968 based on the UN resolution 2396 to suspend "exchanges with the racist regime." South Africa was not readmitted to the Biennale until its apartheid rule was abolished in 1993.

RU Russia: In 2022, the Biennale issued public statements in support of Ukraine's right to self-determination, freedom, and humanity, including a condemnation of "the unacceptable military aggression by Russia," an avowal to reject "any form of collaboration with those who have carried out or supported such a grievous act of aggression," and a refusal to "accept the presence at any of its events of official delegations, institutions or persons tied in any capacity to the Russian government." The decision to shutter the Russia Pavilion in 2022 was taken by the principled artist and curatorial teams of Russia who refused to represent their country while it was engaged in illegal military aggression in Ukraine.

US United States: In 1970, the US Pavilion was boycotted by American artists horrified by the state's participation in the brutal wars in Vietnam and Cambodia. 24 artists withdrew their works, including Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg, RB Kitaj, Claus Oldenburg, Robert Motherwell, Frank Stella, and Andy Warhol. Boycotting artists proposed an alternative exhibition. After discussions with Black feminist activists and the Women Students and Artists for Black Art Liberation (founded by Faith Ringgold and her daughters Michele Wallace and Barbara Wallace), the Liberated Venice Biennale opened in New York City's Alliance Building.

IL Israel: In 2015, protestors occupied the Israeli pavilion and Peggy Guggenheim Collection to highlight human rights violations and government corruption. Since the 1950s, Peggy Guggenheim resided in an 18th-century palace on the Grand Canal, collecting, exhibiting, and gifting highly significant artworks. These works

Palestine in Venice

Palestine has never had a national pavilion because Italy does not recognise it as a sovereign state. Palestine Museum US was included in the collateral programme of the 2022 Biennale, but had its 2024 proposal rejected on 20 October 2023. The proposed project *Foreigners in their Homeland* is presented independently in Venice during the Biennale, opening 20 April. It includes 26 Palestinian artists and considers how, as native inhabitants, they have endured the label of foreigners in their homeland since 1948. The artists capture decades of struggle under brutal occupation, apartheid and now, genocide. The exhibition portrays the suffocating atmosphere of Palestinian life, emphasising the fight for dignity and safety against all odds, as well as the endurance and spirit of the Palestinian people.

Artists + Allies x Hebron in collaboration with Dar Jacir for Art and Research in Bethlehem present *SOUTH WEST BANK – Landworks, Collective Action and Sound* for the 2024 collateral programme—an exhibition focusing on works produced by artists, collectives and allies in and around the southern West Bank, Palestine. The project addresses aspects of land, agriculture and heritage in a rapidly ever-shifting topography, embodying the idea that 'home' is strongly rooted in many traditional practices, such as olive farming—the main source of income for thousands of Palestinian households. Olive trees have long been threatened by Israel, with more than 800,000 destroyed since 1967. Artists + Allies x Hebron aims to draw international attention to the situation in Hebron H2, where Israel exercises military control to monitor Palestinian life throughout the West Bank.

Under occupation, Palestinians continue to be cut off from one another through a labyrinth of checkpoints and partition walls. An artist from Bethlehem cannot travel to Jerusalem, artists in Gaza cannot leave the Strip or engage with their local peers, and artists are separated from their counterparts living in Israel. Palestinians need visas to travel to almost every country, while those resident in the West Bank cannot travel through Israeli airports; they must go to neighboring Jordan in order to travel from Amman.

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ART NOT GENOCIDE ALLIANCE

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ABOUT ANGA

ANGA is an international group of artists, curators, writers, and cultural workers who have come together to call for the exclusion of Israel at the Venice Biennale. We invite you to share the ethical and political position expressed in our statements to the Venice Biennale and to join us in our demands. ANGA is a collective with no individual authors or organisers. We commit to the power of collective action and the principles of shared responsibility. The more of us there are, the more of us there are.

Giardini: A guide to complicity

AU Australia's foreign affairs minister claimed the country has not provided weapons to Israel since the start of the war. But the Australian Greens party's defence spokesman, David Shoebridge, has asked the government to be more transparent about exactly what items have been exported to Israel, noting Australia has one of the most secretive weapons export systems in the world. Amnesty International has called on the country to halt arms sales to Israel, citing 322 defence exports to Israel over the past 6 years.

AT Austria suspended its aid to Palestinians on 9 October 2023 for two months and froze its funding to UNRWA in January 2024. The government has provided Israel with unequivocal political support.

CA Canada: Canadian companies have exported over CAD\$114m in military goods to Israel since 2015. The vast majority of its military exports to Israel come in the form of parts and components: electronics and space equipment; military aerospace exports and components; bombs, missiles, rockets and general military explosives and components. In February 2024, the Canadian government passed a non-binding vote to halt arms exports to Israel.

FR France has sold €207.6m equipment to Israel over the past 10 years. Investigative journalist organisations report that, by the end of October 2023, France authorized the delivery to Israel of at least 100,000 pieces of cartridge for machine guns that could be used against civilians in Gaza. An estimated 4,000+ French nationals are currently serving in the Israel Defense Forces.

DE Germany's military exports rose nearly tenfold in 2023 compared with 2022 after it increased sales to Israel in November, according to figures from the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action. Weapons from Germany make up 30% of Israel's military imports. It primarily supplies Israel with components for air defence systems and communications equipment.

EG Egypt is complicit in blocking aid to Gaza by maintaining the closure of the Rafah crossing and submitting to Israeli control. It is the only state other than Israel to share a border with Gaza. Thousands of aid trucks have been prevented from entering, contributing to the deliberate starvation of people in Gaza. International journalists have been consistently refused access, preventing news coverage. In February 2024, it was reported that Egypt is building a fortified buffer zone near its border with the Gaza Strip that could be used to facilitate the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

GB Great Britain licensed at least £474m in military exports to Israel since 2015. Exports include aircraft, missiles, tanks, technology, ammunition, and components for F-35 stealth bombers used in Gaza. Nine Israeli military aircraft have been authorised to land at and depart from UK bases, and approximately 50 Royal Air Force aircraft have made flights to Israel since 7 October 2023. In January 2024, UK court documents revealed Foreign Office legal advisers were unable to conclude that Israel was in compliance with international humanitarian law in its bombardment of Gaza, yet the government decided to continue arms sales licenses.

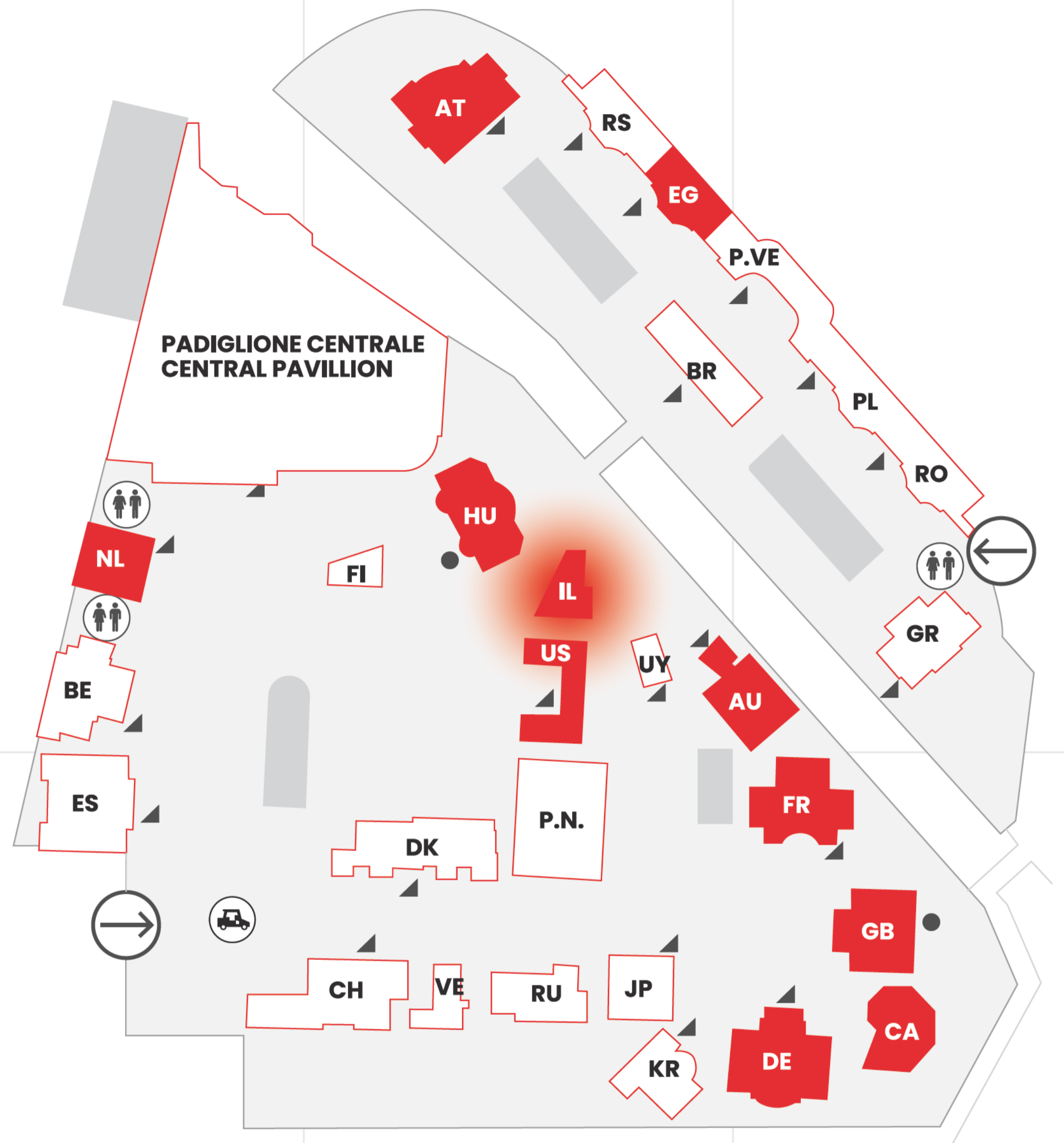
IT Italy exported €2.1m in arms and munitions to Israel in the last three months of 2023. In December alone, Italy exported €1.3m worth of arms - three times more than in the same month in 2022. It supplies 0.9% of Israel's arms. Under Italian law, arms exports are banned to countries waging war and those deemed to be violating international human rights.

HU Hungary has consistently voted against UN resolutions to protect civilians and call for a ceasefire. In February 2024, it refused to join all other EU member states in warning Israel against launching an offensive in Rafah. Hungary's antisemitic far-right government has developed close ties with Israel since 2010, both driven by ethnonationalist agendas.

IL Israel was founded after the emergence of the modern political Zionist movement by European Jews in the late 19th century, which sought to establish an independent Jewish state in response to widespread antisemitism in Europe. The 1917 Balfour Declaration, in which the British publicly pledged to establish "a national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, instigated the large-scale settlement of European Jews in Palestine in the inter-war period. It served as a catalyst for the Nakba ("the Catastrophe") during which Zionist militias committed dozens of massacres and forced the large-scale dispossession and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. Around 15,000 Palestinians were killed, and 750,000-1m were expelled from their homeland and made refugees, amounting to approximately 75% of all Palestinians. At least 530 villages were destroyed. During the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel occupied all of historic Palestine and expelled a further 300,000 Palestinians from their homes. Following the contested and failed 1993 Oslo Accords for a two-state solution, some 750,000 Israeli settlers now live in at least 250 illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem. Palestinians in the occupied territories live under a system of apartheid and are constantly subject to military checkpoints, home demolitions, raids, arrests and extrajudicial killing. Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli land, sea and air blockade. Since 2008, Israel has waged four wars on Gaza, killing more than 4,000 people. Palestinians have always resisted their colonial occupiers, notably during The Great Revolt (1936-39), First Intifada (1987-93) and Second Intifada (2000-05), across which thousands were killed. The Great March of Return (2018-9) was a series of weekly non-violent protests by thousands of Palestinians at the Gaza border fence, demanding the end of the Israeli blockade and the right of return for refugees as enshrined in UN Resolution 194, during which the Israeli Occupation Forces killed 214 Palestinians, including 46 children, and injured over 36,100, including nearly 8,800 children. Israel was officially invited to participate in the Venice Biennale two years after the onset of the Nakba. Israel opened its permanent national pavilion building in the Giardini in 1952. The modernist pavilion was designed by Russian architect Ze'ev Rechter who settled in occupied Palestine in 1919 and is considered a key architect of the Zionist project.

NL The Netherlands was accused by human rights organisations of war crimes complicity over its export of F-35 fighter jet parts to Israel. The government allowed shipment, despite warnings from legal advisors that such jets were being used in large-scale bombing in Gaza, and that the Netherlands could be violation of international law (Article 1 of the Geneva Conventions, the obligation under the Genocide Treaty to prevent genocide, and the obligation under export law). In February 2024, a court in The Hague ruled in favour of the human rights organisation; the government is appealing.

US United States of America has sent Israel around \$158bn in military aid since 1948, and currently supplies 69% of Israel's arms. The US approved and delivered more than 100 separate arms sales to Israel since October 2023, supplying the bulk of defence equipment, including 2000-pound bunker buster bombs that can kill or wound people up to 1,000 feet away. In February 2024, the US Senate passed a \$14bn military aid package for Israel, in addition to the existing \$3.8bn annual military aid agreed for 10 years in 2016. In March 2024, days after the UN Security Council order for an immediate ceasefire, the White House authorised a \$2.5bn arms package including more than 1,800 MK84 2,000-pound bombs and 500 MK82 500-pound bombs.



HOW YOU CAN SHUT DOWN THE GENOCIDE PAVILION AND STOP GENOCIDAL ART WASHING →

- 1 Mobilise your relationships with private and public spaces:** Engage your local galleries and museums to raise awareness about the genocide in Gaza. Urge them to support the exclusion of Israel from the Biennale. In addition, demand that they cut ties with Zionist funders affiliated with the Israeli state. Encourage art spaces to give their platforms to Palestinian voices.
- 2 Withdraw your labour:** If you are in a position to make an impact by refusing to participate in the Biennale or any events that include Israel, consider withdrawing your labour. Withdrawal and refusal work best when done collectively, so discuss with fellow artists and workers what action would be most effective.
- 3 Rally artists and co-workers:** Organise discussions and forums in academic institutions and workplaces to educate each other and learn about the importance of excluding Israel from the Biennale. Encourage fellow artists and co-workers to join the cause

and to voice their support for shutting down the Genocide Pavilion. Remind them to boycott the Genocide Pavilion when they visit the Biennale.

4 Be vocal: Use your voice on social media platforms, in op-eds, and in public forums to speak out against Israel's participation in the Biennale and demand to shut it down. Share information, resources, and personal perspectives to raise awareness and keep up the pressure on the Biennale organisers to take action.

5 Keep up the pressure: Stay informed about developments related to ANGA's campaign to shut down the Genocide Pavilion. Continue to engage with organisers, participants and stakeholders in the Biennale to advocate for the exclusion of Israel, a genocidal apartheid state. Persistence and sustained pressure are key to achieving our goals.