

BRP-Rotax: Austrian Engine Manufacturer with Genocidal Reach

M. P.

July 2025

BRP-Rotax, founded in 1920 and headquartered in **Gunskirchen, Austria**, is a globally recognized manufacturer of high-performance light piston engines[1]. Its two-stroke and four-stroke engines power a wide range of small vehicles on land, at sea, and in the air. As a subsidiary of Bombardier Recreational Products (BRP)[2], many of these engines are integrated into BRP's own line of recreational vehicles. However, Rotax engines are also exported worldwide and used in diverse applications, including military technologies.

In recent decades, Rotax engines have been incorporated into unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)[3] and other systems employed in modern warfare. Their use in drone strikes and military operations has raised concerns about the role of private manufacturing in enabling armed conflict, war, and genocide. Used primarily by the Euro-American empire, Rotax engines are key enablers of atrocities committed by countries like the U.S.A., the U.K., and currently Israel.

Israel has a long history of developing and deploying drones. One of its earliest UAVs, the IAI Zahavan "Scout"[4], was used during the 1982 Lebanon War. At that time, Israeli drones were primarily used for reconnaissance, allowing military commanders to monitor battlefield conditions in real time while reducing risk to soldiers. However, in the decades since, Israel's drone program has evolved dramatically, from surveillance tools to offensive weapons platforms used in cross-border strikes[5] and frequent targeted assassinations[6].

Today, Israel deploys a fleet of advanced military drones, including the IAI Heron TP[7], Heron MK II[8], and Elbit Systems Hermes 900[9]. These UAVs play a central role in Israel's military operations and have been used in numerous armed conflicts, including the current flare-up of the 70-year genocide of Palestinians. Even on June 18th this year Iran had shot down a Hermes 900 that was in operation, many more of these have been shot down by Hezbollah in Lebanon as well[10]. Most notably, all of these drone models are equipped with Rotax engines, manufactured here in Austria.

These engines are not minor components; they are essential to the operation of these long-range drones. Without access to Rotax engines, Israel's drone program would face significant logistical

and financial hurdles. It would finally be forced to look for alternative suppliers, which would disrupt operations at least temporarily.

How does Austria, a supposed “neutral” state, allow companies to supply crucial engines to states currently committing genocide on a helpless population? Is this neutrality or strict (while quiet) complicity in these actions?

One of the key facilitators of this technology transfer is Condor Aviation Industries, an Israeli company established in 1987. Condor specializes in navigation, marine, and aviation systems and is currently the exclusive importer and distributor of Rotax engines in Israel[11].

Condor operates out of multiple locations across Israel, including Caesarea, Herzliya, and the Rishon Le-Zion airfield. It works closely with both private and state clients, including Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)[12], the manufacturer of the Heron drone series. Some Condor personnel reportedly provide direct technical support[13] and engine maintenance for both civilian users and the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)[14]. This paints a clear and continuous supply chain: from Austrian factory floors to Israeli military deployment.

Israel is not only a major consumer of military drones but also a leading global exporter. According to the Israeli Ministry of Defense, the country’s defense exports reached a record high of \$12.5 billion in 2022. Around 25% of all defense export agreements in that year were for UAVs and drone-related technologies, dominated by Israel’s major defense companies: Elbit Systems, IAI, and Rafael Advanced Defense Systems[15].

The reach of Israeli drone exports spans over 30 countries, with especially strong growth in Asia, the Pacific, and Europe. The Abraham Accords[16] have also opened lucrative new markets in the Gulf region, accounting for roughly \$3 billion in defense sales since 2020[15]. Notably, many of the exported UAV systems such as IAI’s Heron and Elbit’s Hermes 900 are powered by Rotax engines produced in Austria.

This booming export sector, which has doubled in less than a decade and increased by 50% in just the last three years, would not be possible without the reliable, high-performance engines like those manufactured by BRP-Rotax. These engines are essential not only to Israel’s domestic drone operations but also to its ability to sell and maintain UAV platforms abroad.

Every drone equipped with an Austrian engine contributes to the global proliferation of a military technology developed and refined **in the context of** Israeli operations in Gaza and the occupied territories. The export success of these drones—used in conflict zones and **frequently** in violation of international humanitarian law—extends the operational and economic power of a nation committing war crimes and systemic ethnic cleansing[17]. Austria, through the continued export of Rotax technology, facilitates not only Israeli military dominance but also its expansion into international markets.

Modern UAVs depend critically on the performance, reliability, and efficiency of their engines.

In Israel's case, this dependency on Austrian technology is clear: the long-range, high-altitude capabilities of drones such as the Heron TP and Hermes 900 are only possible due to the integration of Rotax engines. These engines provide the necessary requirements for extended surveillance[18] and strikes[19] over densely populated civilian areas such as Gaza.

Without these engines, Israel would be unable to carry out its genocide with the current level of precision, reach, and frequency. The absence of a reliable domestic engine manufacturing alternative makes the Israeli military-industrial complex significantly reliant on Austrian technology and Rotax specifically.

This mechanical dependency establishes BRP-Rotax as a foundational contributor to an ongoing genocide[20]. These drones are not simply "tools"; they are platforms for implementing state violence, including targeted assassinations, bombardments of residential zones, destruction of civilian infrastructure, and enforcement of an apartheid surveillance regime.

Each drone launch powered by an Austrian-made engine enables another act of collective punishment. The engines, while marketed as neutral commercial products, function here as enablers of systematic brutality. Their uninterrupted supply ensures the logistical continuity of military operations that have been for long widely condemned under international law.

Austria's role is thus not confined to passive neutrality or economic exchange. Through the continued export and licensing of Rotax engines, Austria directly sustains a technological infrastructure that underpins and accelerates Israel's genocide-making capabilities against the Palestinian people. This complicity must be acknowledged if any honest conversation about neutrality, ethics, and international accountability is to take place.

Austria's export of Rotax engines, whether directly or through intermediaries like Condor, plays a very measurable and material role in the operation and expansion of Israeli drone warfare. As these drones are used in operations that have drawn sharp condemnation from human rights watchdogs[20] and UN officials[17], Austria's stance as a "neutral" country is then proven as a farce.

Neutrality cannot mean turning a blind eye.

If Austria continues to allow critical components like Rotax engines to be funneled into military systems used in war and genocide, it must confront the reality that it is no longer neutral—but very much involved.

References

- [1] Rotax. About Us - Rotax. <https://www.rotax.com/ueber-uns>.
- [2] BRP. BRP Official Website. <https://www.brp.com/en/>.
- [3] FAA. Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). <https://www.faa.gov/uas>.
- [4] Israel Aerospace Industries. Scout UAV. <https://www.iai.co.il/p/scout>.
- [5] Israeli drone strike kills one, injures four in Lebanon's Biqa'a.
- [6] List of Israeli Assassinations - Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Israeli_assassinations.
- [7] Heron TP - NSIN. <https://www.nsin.us/heron-tp/>.
- [8] Heron MK II MALE UAV - Airforce Technology. <https://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/heron-mk-ii-male-uav/?cf-view>.
- [9] Hermes 900 - Airforce Technology. <https://www.airforce-technology.com/projects/hermes-900/?cf-view>.
- [10] Iranian air defenses down Israeli Hermes 900 UAV. <https://en.globes.co.il/en/article-iranian-air-defenses-down-israeli-hermes-900-uav-1001513212>.
- [11] Rotax Condor. <https://www.flyrotax.com/dis/condor>.
- [12] Israel Aerospace Industries. IAI Official Website. <https://www.iai.co.il/>.
- [13] Engine Computer Issues - Rotax Owner Forum. https://www.rotax-owner.com/en/912is-technical-questions/10543-engine-computer_1.
- [14] Israel Defense Forces. IDF Official Website. <https://www.idf.il/en/>.
- [15] Esibat Page - Israel Government Portal. <https://www.gov.il/en/pages/esibat>.
- [16] U.S. Department of State. The Abraham Accords. <https://www.state.gov/the-abraham-accords>.
- [17] UN Human Rights Council on Gaza - Democracy Now! https://www.democracynow.org/2025/7/1/united_nations_human_rights_council_gaza.

- [18] IAI: Unmanned Aerial Dominance. <https://www.iai.co.il/news-media/iai-action/IAI-Unmanned-Aerial-Dominance>.
- [19] Armed drones gave IDF precision in Gaza - Times of Israel. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/armed-drones-gave-idf-surgical-precision-during-recent-gaza-fighting-of>
- [20] Amnesty International. Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/12/amnesty-international-concludes-israel-is-committing-genocide-against-p>