

Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

By email only to: coopery@parliament.uk

22 June 2025

Dear Home Secretary,

URGENT: PALESTINE ACTION

As organisations and individuals committed to the protection of civil liberties and the promotion of human rights, we are deeply concerned about the Government's [reported](#) intention to proscribe Palestine Action under the UK's terrorism legislation. If true, this is a shocking and dangerous attempt to crack down on the right of people in Britain to protest Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza. The proposed proscription of Palestine Action – a direct action group committed to justice for Palestine – is unconscionable and must not be allowed to take effect.

This unprecedented move, if carried out, would ostensibly be a response to recent action by Palestine Action activists spray-painting RAF military planes with red paint. In reality, this would represent the latest in a series of attempts by the Government to crush dissent against Israel's genocide using terrorism powers. Since October 2023, the UK government has escalated its use of draconian counter terrorism laws to criminalise Palestine solidarity activism. Chief among those targeted are Palestine Action activists, such as the Filton 18, who are currently awaiting trial for a previous action against Israel's Elbit Systems.

For the past 20 months, Israel has been carrying out a brutal genocide and extermination campaign against the besieged civilian population of Gaza, with the diplomatic, economic and military support of the UK Government. The RAF has been using these planes to conduct surveillance flights over Gaza on Israel's behalf. By continuing to provide intelligence cooperation and supplying F-35 fighter jet parts to Israel through the global spares pool, the UK government is not merely complicit – it is actively facilitating Israel's mass atrocity crimes in Gaza, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

Under the Genocide Convention, State Parties including the UK are required to take all measures reasonably within their powers to prevent the commission of genocide overseas. In relation to Israel, this obligation has been triggered since at least 26 January 2024, when the ICJ handed down provisional measures confirming that there was a plausible risk of genocide in Gaza. Measures that Governments could reasonably take include cutting off

diplomatic and trade relations, imposing comprehensive sanctions and arms embargoes, and using diplomatic influence to implement a ceasefire.

Rather than fulfilling its obligations under international law to prevent genocide, the Government is systematically attempting to criminalise and isolate people who demand justice for Palestinians and an end to Israel's ongoing genocide. This comes at a time when Israel is continuing its relentless bombing campaign against the displaced population of Gaza, including carrying out daily massacres of starving people gathered to collect much-needed aid.

The UK's counter terrorism laws are by design incredibly broad, with proscription powers able to be used as a political weapon to criminalise dissent. These laws have no place in a rights-respecting society if they are used to outlaw international solidarity against occupation and apartheid, while systematically targeting marginalised communities.

Now, the Government is using proscription powers to strangle domestic resistance to complicity in the genocide in a blatant attempt to quell the massive public support that Palestine Action has earned. In taking this action, the UK surrenders the fundamental freedoms of expression and assembly of its citizens, sacrificing their democratic rights in order to shield a colonial apartheid state committing genocide.

Placing a higher value on minor damage to war planes than on the lives of Palestinians reflects the century-long legacy of colonial violence at the heart of the UK Government's stance towards Palestine today.

We will all actively and publicly resist efforts to proscribe Palestine Action, as well as the UK's sprawling and draconian Terrorism Acts, recognising these attacks as integral fronts in defending human rights, both in the UK and Palestine.

We, the undersigned, urge the Government not to propose a proscription order against Palestine Action and cease using counter terrorism laws to punish and criminalise Palestine solidarity activism and advocacy.

Sincerely,

European Legal Support Centre
Public Interest Law Centre
International Centre of Justice for Palestinians
Campaign Against the Arms Trade
Palestine Solidarity Campaign
British Palestinian Committee
Palestinian Youth Movement