



## **Joint Statement: 50 Days of a Labour Government and arms sales to Israel continue unabated**

**50 days of inexcusable delays. 50 days of complicity. 50 days of impunity for Israel's crimes.**

**On Labour's 50th day in office, our organisations condemn the government's failure to suspend export licences for arms transfers to Israel. Every day that this government fails to take action, the UK is materially and politically supporting Israel's genocide against Palestinians.**

Last week, Ministers signing off on arms export licences were served hundreds of pages of legal evidence and testimony of the innumerable violations of international law committed by the Israeli government, by Al-Haq and GLAN as part of their ongoing judicial review, which is being supported by ICJP, Human Rights Watch, Oxfam, Amnesty International UK, and CAAT. The only legal and moral option available to the government in the face of this evidence is to immediately halt all arms export licences for transfer to Israel.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy [told Parliament](#) on 19th July "As soon as I took office, I tasked officials with a comprehensive review of Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law, and that process is now under way" and said that he will update Parliament "once the process is complete." Amid speculation over the summer the government has repeatedly been quoted as stating there has been "[no change](#)" in its approach to arms licensing to Israel.

In this past week alone, massacres have been committed by Israel through airstrikes on schools and tent encampments sheltering displaced civilians and on one of the last functioning markets, a site essential for civilian survival, in Deir al-Balah. Such scenes, of intolerable suffering and inhumanity, are ensured by each day of governmental inaction.

Under UK law, the Strategic Export Licensing Criteria states that export licences should not be issued if there is a "clear risk" arms exports might be used in a "serious violation of international humanitarian law".

Given the overwhelming evidence of the most egregious violations of international law, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, it is implausible that the government's review has not yet reach a conclusion, as Palestinians continue to be slaughtered.

Existing licences in place include the Open General licence that allows unlimited deliveries of components for Israel's F-35 combat aircraft, which are being used to continually bomb Gaza, including with 2000 lb bombs.



How much longer will Palestinians have their humanity denied and human rights violated with the support of our government? How many more thousands will be killed before we stop arming Israel? Why is Israel's genocide of more than 40,000 Palestinians and the unquantifiable suffering of millions not enough for our government to act?

**Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT)**  
**Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)**  
**International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP)**  
**War on Want**

## Timeline

- On 16th August [it was reported](#) that a British diplomat resigned from the FCDO because of continued arm sales to Israel. He stated in his resignation letter: "Each day we witness clear and unquestionable examples of war crimes and breaches of international humanitarian law in Gaza perpetuated by the state of Israel."
- Israeli torture, according to the [evidence submitted](#) to the High Court by GLAN and Al-Haq on 16 August and cases widely reported in [Israeli media](#) and by [UN experts](#), is now so routine it undoubtedly contaminates intelligence and undermines assurances given to the UK and other governments as they make decisions on arms exports.
- On 19th July the ICJ declared that Israel's occupation of the Gaza strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is unlawful, along with the associated settlement regime, annexation and use of natural resources. The Court added that Israel's legislation and measures violate the international prohibition on racial segregation and apartheid. The ICJ mandated Israel to end its occupation, dismantle its settlements, provide full reparations to Palestinian victims and facilitate the return of displaced people.
- On 20th June, [UN experts announced](#) that States and companies must end arms transfers to Israel immediately or risk responsibility for human rights violations, "possibly including genocide". They specified that this "must include indirect transfers through intermediary countries that could ultimately be used by Israeli forces, particularly in the ongoing attacks on Gaza."
- On 1st April, seven aid workers with World Central Kitchen were killed in Gaza when their convoy was hit by a precision missile as they travelled on a deconflicted route, cleared with the Israeli military. On 9th April, speaking in Washington, then Foreign Secretary David Cameron announced that the UK would not halt arms transfers to Israel, stating "The latest assessment leaves our position on export licences unchanged. This is consistent with the advice that I and other ministers have received."



- On 20th May the ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan [filed applications for warrants of arrest](#) for Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel, and Yoav Gallant, the Minister of Defence of Israel. Their crimes include but are not limited to: starvation of civilians as a method of warfare; intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population; extermination; persecution as a crime against humanity.
- On 23rd February UN Special Rapporteurs, Independent Experts and Working Groups issued [a statement](#) warning that the transfer of weapons or ammunition to Israel that would be used in Gaza is likely to violate international humanitarian law and must stop immediately.
- On 26th January and 28th March the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued rulings to impose provisional measures on Israel to prevent genocide against the Palestinian people in Gaza. The ruling of the 26th January, on the plausible risk that genocide is being committed by Israel in Gaza, ought to have been sufficient cause to activate the United Kingdom's preventative duty to act under the Genocide Convention (1948), Article 1.

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