UK charities urge incoming Prime Minister to take decisive action to protect Palestinians

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We write as a coalition of UK humanitarian, development, human rights, environmental justice and faith-based agencies working in and on the Occupied Palestinian Territory to urge the incoming Prime Minister to take urgent action to protect Palestinians facing an existential threat of erasure, and ensure that the UK meets its legal and moral obligations.

The Government of Israel has deepened its control over Palestinian life and land in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, accelerating unprecedented state-sponsored settlement expansion; increased military raids and attacks on Palestinian civilians; suffocating restrictions on freedom of movement; and ever-expansive attacks on humanitarian and civic space.

The impact on Palestinians is devastating. More than 73,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, more than a thousand of those since the so-called ceasefire agreement came into effect in October 2025. The humanitarian situation remains catastrophic, as Israel continues to systematically block aid - including food, fuel, medical supplies, shelter materials, and reconstruction items. This has been compounded by severe environmental destruction. Last month, an independent UN Commission of Inquiry concluded that Israeli forces and authorities have continued to commit genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Gaza, and war crimes in the West Bank, particularly through the targeting of children.

In the West Bank, more than 1,100 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces and settlers since October 2023. According to the UN, more than 6,200 Palestinians have been displaced as a result of settler attacks and related access restrictions in the West Bank since 2023, in addition to 32,000 Palestinians from the Jenin, Tulkarem, and Nur Shams refugee camps who remain forcibly displaced a year and a half after the Israeli military's "Operation Iron Wall."

These devastating conditions persist due to the impunity afforded to Israel by its allies – including the UK - for its persistent and serious violations of international law. Ending this

impunity is essential, and will require a significant departure from the approach of Keir Starmer's government.

It is almost two years since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued its Advisory Opinion, which significantly found that Israel's occupation is unlawful, and that Israel's policies and practices amount to annexation and aggravate its violation of Palestinians' right to self-determination. The Court also affirmed that Israel's discriminatory laws and policies against Palestinians violate Article 3 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which prohibits racial segregation and apartheid. While the UK Government has recognised its obligation not to render aid or assistance to the occupation, the steps taken under the outgoing Prime Minister have failed to sufficiently address the scale of Israel's serious violations and atrocities, and fall far short of meeting the UK's moral and legal obligations.

The incoming Prime Minister now has an opportunity, and an historic moral responsibility, to chart a different course and protect Palestinians from Israel's serious violations and atrocities. Andy Burnham, the likely successor, has made welcome statements indicating such a shift: this must now be accompanied by urgent and meaningful action — for which the ICJ's Advisory Opinion provides a clear framework.

The Government should urgently publish its response to the Opinion, set out a rapid timeline for implementing the Court's recommendations, and take immediate steps to uphold international law. This must include:

1. Imposing a comprehensive ban on the trade of all goods, services and investments that enable illegal settlement activity
2. Invoking the fundamental human rights provision of the UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement and lawfully suspend trade concessions with Israel until all relevant widespread violations of international law are brought to an end
3. Suspending **all** arms sales and transfers to Israel.

As Israel's policies clearly pose an existential threat to Palestinians and Palestinian self-determination, the incoming Prime Minister must act without delay. Polling consistently shows that each of these measures commands significant public support in the UK.

- ActionAid UK
- Amnesty International UK
- Amos Trust
- CAFOD
- Christian Aid
- Council for Arab-British Understanding (CAABU)
- Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Global Justice Now
- Islamic Relief UK
- Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights (LPHR)
- Medical Aid for Palestinians
- Muslim Aid
- Quakers in Britain
- Save the Children UK
- SCIAF
- War On Want
- Women for Women International