

12 September 2025

The Right Honourable Sir Keir Starmer
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

Re: Urgent Need to Sanction Israel

Dear Prime Minister,

This week marks the UN General Assembly deadline for Israel to end its illegal occupation and apartheid. Israel has not only utterly failed to end the occupation, it has in fact escalated its depraved genocidal violence in Gaza, including against UN staff and facilities, and dramatically increased land theft, settlement expansion, and attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank.

The official number (and most likely huge under estimate) of Palestinians killed in Gaza since 7 October 2023 stands at around 64,500 people. The UN-backed Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) initiative has recently confirmed that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in northern Gaza are suffering from famine.

NIC-ICTU is a longtime supporter of the BDS campaign and are now in the process of stepping up these actions in line with a motion to our Biennial Delegate Conference in Belfast in July. We are declaring ourselves an apartheid free zone – reviewing all of our procurement and pension investments to ensure that we are not inadvertently complicit in Israel’s horrific actions. Many affiliates have also been doing similar work.

We believe the gravity of the situation is such that it is time for the British Government to comply with your legal obligations under international law, as [called for by dozens of UN human rights experts](#), including:

- Sanctions on individuals promoting and committing war crimes.
- Imposing “a full arms embargo on Israel, halting all arms agreements, imports, exports and transfers, including of dual-use items.”
- Cancelling or suspending “economic relationships, trade agreements and academic relations with Israel that may contribute to its unlawful presence and apartheid regime in the occupied Palestinian territory. / Banning imported illegal settlement goods.
- Expelling apartheid Israel from the UN by withdrawing its accreditation to the UN General Assembly and push for lawful sanctions against it similar to those imposed on apartheid South Africa.

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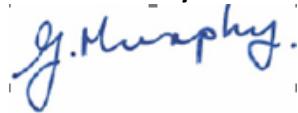
- Consideration should also be given to joining [The Hague Group](#), an inter-state initiative so far aimed at promoting concrete sanctions and meaningful, consequential accountability measures, and endorsing and implementing their [Bogotá Declaration](#).
- And seeking the expulsion of apartheid Israel from the UN by withdrawing its accreditation to the UN General Assembly and to push for lawful sanctions against it similar to those imposed on apartheid South Africa.

Your inaction so far has led to an unconscionable situation for some trade union members worried about being exposed to complicity through handling of Israeli goods, facilitating trade with Israel or even worse the trade of arms with Israel. It would not be surprising if some of these develop into flashpoints of conscientious objection by some workers and trade unions will not be found wanting in supporting workers from any consequences of such actions.

This situation is not tenable however and it is important that there are legal protections for such actions.

I look forward to your attention to this urgent matter

Yours sincerely



GERRY MURPHY
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