

## Britain's "Blueprint" Regarding Israel: "The Right to Commit Crimes". UK Political Leaders Bring Shame on Our Country

As a British Palestinian, it will forever be etched in my memory how my fellow citizens were being slaughtered in Gaza and the British political class gave Israel its unconditional support, writes Hamza Ali Shah.

By [Hamza Ali Shah](#)

Global Research, October 23, 2023

[Declassified UK](#) 21 October 2023

Region: [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [History](#), [Intelligence](#), [Law and Justice](#)

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*Begin as you mean to go on. That is the defining position of Britain's blueprint regarding Israel.*

It was Britain that gave the colonial project that morphed into the state of Israel its initial blessing via the Balfour Declaration in 1917, to create the conditions for the establishment of a Jewish "national home" in historic Palestine - where Jews constituted less than 10 percent of the population at the time.

This laid the groundwork for the start of the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians. And at every step of the way, as Israel has consolidated its power and oppression, Britain's blessing has been on hand. Israel's latest attempt to wipe out Gaza is no different.

More than [4,000](#) Palestinians have been murdered, at least [1,000](#) of whom are children. At least 11 Palestinian journalists, 28 medical staff and 14 United Nations workers have been killed.

Residents of Gaza have been forced to [dig wells](#) near the sea to fetch water whilst hospitals - those that are still standing - are at full capacity and severely lacking power.

Nowhere is considered safe in Gaza, especially as "safe routes" have been bombed by Israel and the only crossing that allows civilians to flee has been repeatedly [struck](#).

Human rights experts have said Israel's actions amount to [collective punishment](#), a war crime under international law. It matters little since Israeli officials have not attempted to hide their intentions.

## 'The Emphasis Is on Damage'

"Gaza will become a place where no human can exist", [declared](#) a retired Major General. "The emphasis is on damage, not accuracy", [proclaimed](#) the IDF spokesperson.

This carnage has never been about Israel defending itself. The onslaught on Gaza, just like every other time, is another excuse to implement the strategic objective of annihilating the Palestinians, or as Israel calls it, ["mowing the lawn"](#).

And as a British Palestinian, it will forever be etched in my memory how my fellow citizens were being mercilessly slaughtered, and the British political class gave Israel its full-throated, unconditional support.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak offered multiple versions of the same moral backing, from ["full solidarity"](#) to promising to always ["stand"](#) with Israel. He continued to echo those sentiments when he landed in Israel on Thursday, yet [could not answer](#) when asked if he would call for Israeli restraint.

As the barbarity of today's atrocities becomes clearer, we stand unequivocally with Israel.

This attack by Hamas is cowardly and depraved.

We have expressed our full solidarity to [@netanyahu](#) and will work with international partners in the next 24 hours to co-ordinate support.

— Rishi Sunak (@RishiSunak) [October 7, 2023](#)

"Will you be urging restraint on the Israeli government regarding civilians in Gaza?" [@mattfrei](#) asks Rishi Sunak if he will call for restraint during the Prime Minister's visit to Israel. [pic.twitter.com/l7rtlBqatw](#)

— Channel 4 News (@Channel4News) [October 19, 2023](#)

The lobbying group Conservative Friends of Israel was once [described](#) as "the largest organisation in Western Europe dedicated to the cause of the people of Israel". It consequently makes the unwavering championship of Israel among the Conservative hierarchy unsurprising.

## Right to Commit Crimes

But the Labour Party is now operating on the same spineless wavelength. As Israel pounded Gaza, party leader Keir Starmer [regurgitated](#) the robotic recitations about Israel's right to defend itself.

The former human rights lawyer then insisted Israel has the ["right"](#) to withhold power and

water from Gaza, even as UN experts [made clear](#) the imposition of sieges that endanger lives of civilians are prohibited under international law.

The fish ostensibly rots from the head. Shadow attorney general Emily Thornberry [could not answer](#) whether Israel cutting off power supplies to Gaza is in line with international law.

On Israel's evacuation orders that have displaced thousands of Palestinians, shadow foreign secretary David Lammy [failed to](#) condemn them.

As Labour councillors across the country [resigned](#) en masse to protest against their party's complicity, Starmer's feeble [letter](#) in response made no mention of a ceasefire and maintained the line simply that Israel has the right to defend itself.

□ NEW: In a letter to Labour councillors, Starmer doubles down on his comments about Israel/Palestine, insisting that "Israel has the right to defend herself".

He offers no apology for saying that Israel has the right to withhold water and power. [pic.twitter.com/YAygVZJR3](https://pic.twitter.com/YAygVZJR3)

— Stats for Lefties 🇬🇧 🇮🇱 (@LeftieStats) [October 18, 2023](#)

The leader who has equivocated and sat on the fence on every political issue since his election to the helm of the party, has finally remained firm on a decision, and it is to offer unyielding support for the massacre of Palestinians.

## Anomaly

Such a level of unshakeable, cross-party consensus on policy in Britain is a rarity. But Israel is the anomaly. So, in these quarters, Israel knows it has a dependable ally.

Importantly, Britain's support goes beyond the diplomatic domain. Since 2015, it has [licenced](#) £472m worth in arms sales to Israel.

In the 2021 bombardment of Gaza, British military hardware was [used](#) by Israel. That remains a possibility this time too.

However, already the British government has made clear it has [no plans](#) to suspend arms sales to Israel. Britain is thus not just implicated in Israel's atrocities against the Palestinians, but it appears to consider them fair game too.

## No State 'On my Watch'

Yet both main parties keep up the pretence they're fundamentally committed to an alternative that liberates Palestinians. The two-state solution is still the main policy stand for both.

But nobody can in good faith deny that Israel has locked in the [one-state reality](#) of apartheid. Hence, it is ignorant at best and deliberately performative at worst; offering the veneer of compassion to Palestinian self-determination even as the facts on the ground scrupulously neutralise the possibility.

Indeed, in 2015, Benjamin Netanyahu said there will be no Palestinian state [“on my watch”](#). Israel must [“crush”](#) Palestinian statehood ambitions, he reiterated this year.

True to his word, Netanyahu’s cabinet in 2023 have taken major steps towards annexation of the West Bank. A peak number of illegal settlements have been [advanced](#) by Israel this year concurrent with a ramping up in the number of house demolitions and subsequent forcible displacement of Palestinian communities.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu’s finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, who advocated for the [wiping out](#) of a Palestinian town, believes every part of Israel and the occupied territories was [promised](#) to Jews by God and Palestinians should [either](#) emigrate, be killed or forgo their national aspirations if they want to reside - with unequal rights.

It is of little shock Israel is flattening Gaza with such fascists in high office.

## Accountability

And when the time comes to hold Israel to account for its harrowing war crimes, Britain will inevitably shield it from any accountability and block the attempts of the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, as it did in [2021](#) and [this year](#) respectively.

All whilst the mass murder of Palestinians continues unabated.

It is the tragic story that has defined the Palestinian existence. In 1948, at least 750,000 Palestinians were expelled as their homes, villages and communities were systematically destroyed and occupied.

Many were murdered trying to protect their homes, like my paternal grandmother’s brother and his son. Others who escaped in that period, like my paternal grandmother and my maternal great grandmother, died in exile.

Now there are warnings from the UN that the atrocities in Gaza amount to another instance of Palestinian ethnic cleansing. But the reality is the *Nakba* was not a chapter confined to history. It has been an ongoing project since 1948.

That’s why whilst Israel pulverises Gaza, it is [simultaneously murdering](#) Palestinians in the West Bank. There is no worthwhile Hamas influence there, nor any Israeli hostages. Just more Palestinians that need to be exterminated to guarantee Jewish Supremacy from the river to the sea.

And nobody should be under any illusions: Britain is dripping in the blood of Palestinian massacres and it will never wash.

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