



Urgent Action Office 3-1992 Yonge Street Toronto ON M4S 1Z7 Phone: (416) 363-9933 Fax: (416) 363-3103 urgentaction@amnesty.ca
Fourth UA: 77/25 Index: EUR 45/0540/2025 United Kingdom of December 11, 2025

UNITED KINGDOM OVER 600 FURTHER ARRESTS AT PEACEFUL PROTESTS

Between November 18 and 29, more than 600 protesters were arrested for peacefully opposing the ban on the group "Palestine Action." The protests were organised by the grassroots network "Defend Our Juries." Since the ban took effect in early July 2025, more than 2,700 people have been arrested across the UK. About 254 protesters have already been charged under the UK's counter-terrorism laws. Authorities have also warned that more charges may be coming. These arrests and charges target people who were simply exercising their rights to free expression and peaceful assembly. Amnesty International calls on UK authorities to drop all existing charges. We also urge them to refrain from taking further action against anyone arrested for peacefully speaking out.

Write to the Directors of Public Prosecutions for England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Lord Advocate urging them to:

- Uphold the UK's human rights commitments.
- Drop all charges and stop all prosecutions against people who took part in peaceful protests in support of "Palestine Action."

Write to:

Director of Public Prosecutions of England and Wales, Steven Parkinson

Email: enquiries@cps.gov.uk

Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland, Stephen Herron

Email: info@ppsni.gov.uk

The Lord Advocate, Rt Hon Dorothy Bain KC

Email: LordAdvocate@gov.scot

Salutation: Dear Directors of Public Prosecutions for England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Lord Advocate

And copy:

His Excellency Robert John Tinline

High Commissioner

British High Commission

140 Sussex Drive

Ottawa, ON K1N 5A2

Tel: (613) 237-1530 Fax: (613) 232-0738

Email: ukincanada@fco.gov.uk

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Defend Our Juries is a UK-based activist group that has stated clearly that it does not promote or support violence. Since July 2025, the group has organised four mass peaceful actions to oppose the

UK government's decision to ban Palestine Action. Three actions took place in London on August 9, September 6, and October 4. Another took place in Liverpool on September 28. Between November 18 and 29, 2025, they held more peaceful protests across the UK.

These latest actions coincided with the judicial review of the government's proscription of Palestine Action as a "terrorist" group. The hearings were held at the Royal Courts of Justice in London on November 26–27 and December 2. Amnesty International joined the case through a legal submission arguing that the ban is disproportionate.

Those arrested include people of many ages, professions, and backgrounds. A large number of older adults took part. Protesters were peacefully expressing anger at Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. They have the right to hold and share these views under international human rights law. Many human rights organisations, including Amnesty International, have documented Israel's ongoing genocide in the occupied Gaza Strip.

Charges under counter-terrorism laws carry serious consequences, even without a conviction. These consequences may include strict bail conditions, surveillance, damage to reputation, mental health impacts, and limits on employment, education, and travel. A conviction under the Terrorism Act 2000 can lead to a lifelong criminal record, visa restrictions, lost job opportunities, and long-term stigma. When such laws are used against peaceful protest, they discourage people from speaking out or taking part in activism out of fear of being labelled as "terrorists."

Arresting people simply for displaying signs that say "I Oppose Genocide. I Support Palestine Action" violates the UK's international human rights obligations. People have the right to peacefully protest and express concern about Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Under international law, restrictions on expression or assembly must be lawful, necessary, and proportionate.

Support for a banned organisation can only be restricted if the expression is likely to incite immediate violence. Authorities must consider the specific facts of the case, the nature of the organisation, and the context of the expression. In this situation, treating all expressions of support for Palestine Action as incitement is not justified. The European Court of Human Rights has also held that placards are protected expression unless they directly and explicitly call for violence.

The legal basis for using counter-terrorism powers against peaceful protesters is uncertain. The High Court has heard the judicial review challenging the proscription of Palestine Action, but has not yet issued its ruling. Continuing to arrest protesters during this period is a reckless use of police authority. It may also breach the requirement that restrictions be lawful and clearly defined.

There is no reasonable basis to claim that Defend Our Juries protesters are inciting violence. Arresting them is disproportionate and violates the UK's international human rights obligations. Labeling peaceful protesters as "terrorists" is inappropriate and absurd.

Please take action as soon as possible until June 1, 2026. The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.