

URGENT ACTION

OVER 500 FURTHER ARRESTS AT PEACEFUL PROTESTS

On 11 April, over 500 protesters were arrested for opposing the ban on the 'Palestine Action' group at a series of peaceful protests organized by grassroots campaigning group 'Defend Our Juries'. Over 3300 arrests have now been carried out across the UK since the ban came into force in early July 2025 and over 1200 protesters have been charged with terrorism-related offences under the UK's counter terror legislation, with more charges likely to come. Amnesty International continues to call on the relevant UK authorities to drop the existing charges and take no further action against these and any other individuals arrested and charged simply for the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

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

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

*On 11 April, **over 500 protesters** were arrested for opposing the ban on the 'Palestine Action' group at a series of peaceful protests organized by grassroots campaigning group 'Defend Our Juries' (DOJ) across the UK.*

Since the ban against 'Palestine Action' came into effect on 5 July 2025, over 3300 arrests of peaceful protesters have taken place across the country simply for their engagement in acts of peaceful protest opposing the proscription. The majority of these arrests have followed protests organised by Defend Our Juries. To date, over 1200 individuals across the UK have been formally charged with terror-related offences under either section 12 or section 13 of the UK's 2000 Terrorism Act, and more charges are continuing to be made against the arrested protesters.

Amnesty International sent observers to the DOJ protest on 11 April, held in London's Trafalgar Square. At this protest, as with all previous DOJ protests, Amnesty International observed protesters holding 'I oppose Genocide, I support Palestine Action' signs to be entirely peaceful.

Under international human rights law, to which the UK is bound, any restriction on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly must be lawful, necessary and proportionate to achieving a legitimate aim. Criminalising speech in this context is only permitted when it incites violence, hatred or discrimination. Expressing support for Palestine Action does not in itself meet this threshold.

The UK's High Court ruled in February 2026 that the proscription of Palestine Action was unlawful but suspended the effect until a decision from the Court of Appeal, estimated to arrive sometime in June. Following the ruling, police in England & Wales have continued to arrest peaceful protesters in a reckless use of police power which risks breaching the principle of legality.

I urge you to uphold UK's human rights commitments, drop the charges and not pursue prosecutions against all those who participated in peaceful protests in support of 'Palestine Action'.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

'Defend our Juries' is an activist-led, UK-based group that has made clear it neither promotes nor endorses violence. Since July 2025, they organised multiple mass actions of peaceful disobedience expressing opposition to the proscription of Palestine Action group.

Peaceful protests were organised around the start of the judicial review hearing of the UK government's proscription of 'Palestine Action' as a 'terrorist' group, which took place at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, on 26-27 November 2025 and 2 December 2025. Amnesty International intervened in the case through a legal submission, which argued that the ban is disproportionate.

The arrested protesters come from a wide range of ages, professions and backgrounds, and include a significant number of older adults. Peaceful protesters are freely expressing their outrage at Israel's genocide against Palestinians in the Occupied Gaza Strip, which is protected expression under international human rights law. Numerous human rights groups, including Amnesty International, have extensively documented and exposed Israel's continuing genocide against Palestinians in the Occupied Gaza Strip.

Prosecutions under terrorism-related legislation, even without a conviction, can have serious and lasting consequences on individuals. These include restrictive bail conditions, surveillance, reputational damage, mental health impact, and negative consequences on employment, education and travel. A conviction under laws like the Terrorism Act 2000 brings even more severe consequences: a lifelong criminal record, visa and immigration issues, loss of job opportunities, professional licenses, and access to services, along with long-term social stigma and psychological harm. When such prosecutions target peaceful protest and civil disobedience, they create a chilling effect—detering people from exercising their rights to free expression, protest, and political activism out of fear of being criminalized as 'terrorists'.

The arrests of peaceful protesters simply for displaying the message 'I Oppose Genocide. I Support Palestine Action' violates UK's international obligations to protect freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Protesters have a right to freely express outrage at the ongoing genocide by Israel against Palestinians in the Occupied Gaza Strip. Under the international human rights framework to which the UK is a party, state interference with the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly must be lawful, and be necessary and proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. Expression of support for a proscribed organisation could only meet this threshold if that expression were likely to induce its audience to partake in violence, and to do so imminently. As part of this assessment, the particular facts of the expression, the proscription and the nature of the organisation in question must also be considered. In this instance, it cannot be justified to treat expression of support for Palestine Action as inherently and uniformly incitement. Caselaw by the European Court for Human Rights stated that placards are protected speech unless they directly and expressly constitute incitement.

There is no reasonable basis to consider participants at 'Defend our Juries' actions as inciting violence, hatred or discrimination

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 26 November 2026

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Peaceful protestors challenging the 'Palestine Action' ban (All)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/EUR45/0540/2025/en/>