

Gaza



What's just happened, how did the UK government respond, and what's it got to do with us?

On 1 August, Israel arrested the Islamic Jihad leader Bassam al-Saadi in Jenin on the West Bank, and killed a 16 year old, shot in the back during the raid. They expected Gaza to respond.

While talks with Palestinian resistance groups were mediated by Egypt and the UN, Israel closed Gaza's northern border, preventing medical patients from leaving. They ended fuel supplies for Gaza's only power plant, limiting electricity to 4 hrs per day, threatening the collapse of the health service. There was no military response.

Then on 5 August, Israel launched simultaneous attacks, killing an Islamic Jihad commander in a media centre in Gaza City, other Islamic Jihad members all over Gaza, and civilians including a 5 year old girl Alaa Qaddoum. This provoked the rocket fire Israel evidently wanted. Over the weekend, Israel slaughtered a family in Rafah, a child and grandmother at a wedding party in Beit Hanoun,

brothers riding their father's horse-drawn cart, a worker returning from his shop, and a policeman at the scene in Gaza City. At least 49 Palestinians died, including 17 children.

Israeli claims that some were killed by stray Palestinian rockets, are under investigation in Gaza. Israel's unilateral state terrorism came first, provoking the response. It also broke international law. Killing civilians is prohibited, and outside of war, lethal force may only be used when strictly necessary to prevent imminent harm to life, when arrest is not an option. Closures, fuel cutoffs and the siege of Gaza itself are collective punishment, Israel simply executed their targets.

These crimes were committed to shore up the political fortunes of the interim Prime Minister Yair Lahid before an election in November, and to uphold an apartheid system in which Palestinian lives do not matter.

But what's it got to do with us? ►

Stop Arming Israel

Bringing it all back home

The **Liverpool Arms Fair** last October involved Israeli drone firm Elbit, Raytheon Technologies, L3 Harris and others supplying the Israeli military with weapons used in Gaza. **Liverpool University** has research projects funded by BAE Systems and other complicit companies. The **Merseyside Pension Fund**, covering local government workers, invests £34m in over 20 companies supplying the Israeli military, including BAE Systems, Caterpillar, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin, L3 Harris.

We ask you to speak up, use our leaflets, attend our public meetings, help us leaflet Labour conference delegates despite their leadership's stance, encourage local government workers to demand their pensions are taken out of this nightmare, and support the international, Palestinian-led movement for Boycott Divestment and Sanctions against Israeli Apartheid. The Government won't do this. It's down to all of us.

→ **Stop Arming Israel** ←

Liz Truss

The day after Israel's unilateral attack, the Foreign Secretary declared "the UK stands by Israel and its right to defend itself" and "we condemn terrorist groups firing at civilians". She did not mention state terrorism.

The Labour Party kept silent, until the ceasefire. Shadow Foreign Secretary David Lammy tweeted "Israel has the right to defend itself and we condemn all acts of terrorism" before finally mentioning international law.

BBC

A BBC website headline declared **Israel-Gaza: Unusual pre-emptive hit by Israel pays off**. That's the BBC's own words, not hiding behind an unattributed phrase. The text reported unnamed Israeli officials claiming they had " 'precise, detailed

intelligence' that [Islamic Jihad] was planning to attack military or civilian targets nearby with sniper or anti-tank fire. Still, it was unusual for Israel to make a pre-emptive strike on the Palestinian territory. But from an Israeli perspective, the risk paid off."

The BBC hadn't seen the evidence and didn't mention international law, but the hit paid off, so all's well.

Kim Johnson

Liverpool MP Kim Johnson was a lone voice on 5 August: "**Israeli bombs have today killed several people in Gaza including a 5 year old girl. The international community must not stay silent. The attacks must stop and the 15-year long illegal blockade must be lifted.**" Well done Kim. Where was everyone else?



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