

October 2025: The Sheikh Radwan area of Gaza City, taken on October 11. At least 92% of homes in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged, according to the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Yousef Zaanoun/ActiveStills

GAZA NIGHTMARE IT'S NOT OVER YET

After two years of Israel's non-stop bombing and deliberate starvation, Palestinians welcomed the shred of hope represented by the ceasefire.

But their hospitals, schools, universities and holy sites have all been reduced to rubble.

All utilities have been destroyed.

At least those who have been sheltering in tents outside the ruins of hospitals are no longer at risk of drone attack. But they are eking out a living amid the wreckage and raw sewage.

There may be a pause in the bloodshed but the suffering continues. More than nine out of 10 (92%) of homes have been destroyed or damaged according to the UN, leaving most people without adequate shelter.

Amnesty International, the UN and others have labelled the destruction of Gaza a genocide.

The emotional devastation will last for generations.

The international charity Save the Children estimates that 2% of Gaza's child population has been killed since October 2023.

In a statement on October 8, Catherine Russell, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), said: "In the last two years, a staggering 64,000 children have reportedly been killed or maimed across the Gaza Strip, including at least 1,000 babies. We don't know how many more have died due to preventable illnesses or are buried under the rubble."

IN NUMBERS ...

64,000

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Statement by UNICEF executive director Catherine Russell

The authoritative UK medical journal *The Lancet* reported that nearly 55,000 children under the age of six were suffering from acute malnutrition as a result of Israel's blockades.

"The reality on the ground has not changed," said Asem Alnabih, the spokesperson for Gaza municipality, when the ceasefire was announced.

He added that famine was still a threat, food, clean water and medicines scarce, infrastructure non-existent and the healthcare system

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CEASEFIRE – WHAT CEASEFIRE?

The Gaza ceasefire agreement came into effect on October 10 ...

- Between October 10 and October 19 Israel committed 80 violations.
- From October 10 to November 3, Israeli forces killed 236 people in Gaza, mostly civilians.
- Only 145 aid trucks per day have been allowed into Gaza by Israel since October 10. 600 a day are required for basic needs.



October 2025: Reem Nast, a mother of seven, holds her 10-year-old son, Nafez, suffering from severe malnutrition, at Nuseirat camp, Gaza. Nafez's weight dropped to just eight kilograms and the family were in a small tent after being displaced from northern Gaza

Doaa Albaz/ActiveStills



Palestine News goes beyond routine one-sided and context-free reporting of Gaza and the West Bank, Palestine and Israel, putting human stories into context, explaining the history and the political background, and showing why there is a massive movement in solidarity with Palestinians after two years of terrible suffering following seven decades of brutal oppression.



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TRUMP DEAL

The 'Abraham Accords' will create destitute apartheid enclaves in Gaza and West Bank

The "Trump Deal" of October 9 stopped the slaughter and aid supplies were due to resume at pre-October 2023 levels.

But Gaza, already one of the most densely populated areas on the globe, was shrunk to half its former size. Israel continued its military occupation and blockade. Hamas ceased to govern and an outside administration was waiting in the wings.

Israeli premier Benjamin Netanyahu has intensified his control of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. An independent Palestinian state is in the clouds.

The oil states will likely fund any reconstruction, with lucrative contracts for multinationals, and no opportunity for Palestinians to rebuild their own economy.

Part two of the Trump peace deal, the two-state solution – like a mirage – will be lost in endless negotiations.

And there has not been one peace deal to date that the Israeli government has not broken. It wrecked both the Gaza agreements over the past two years.

Israel handed over hundreds of Palestinian detainees from its jails, except the unifying figure of Marwan Barghouti. But there is nothing to stop them rounding up hundreds more, including children.

Even after the 2,000 prisoners slated to be exchanged, Israel will continue to hold some 8,000 Palestinians, most of whom have never seen a court.

There is no halt to the torture of the prisoners nor the murderous attacks on Palestinian communities in East Jerusalem and the West Bank by settlers and the army.

There is no prospect of freedom from the occupation Palestinians have suffered for more than 75 years – not even a step towards civil rights and freedom of movement.

Trump's Abraham Accords will make Gaza and the West Bank a scattering of destitute enclaves in a full blown apartheid.

The future of two million terrorised survivors looks to be in the hands of a reckless megalomaniac in Washington and western big-money speculators.

STOP SENDING ARMS!

Everyone wants to know: how can peace in Gaza be guaranteed? There is one way that Britain can help ensure it is. So can other European states and the USA.

They can stop supplying weapons to Israel.

The big threat to peace is from Israel: it could resume its relentless wars on a whim – to finally fix control of all Palestinian lands, and to subdue neighbouring states.

Israel is a warrior state and is strong, but it has one weakness: it lacks the capacity to manufacture all its weapons.

It is good at hi-tech gadgetry but cannot manage the vast quantities of bombs, guns, planes, tanks and armoured vehicles that it gets

through. Western nations have largely made up the shortfall.

While the assault on Gaza was blazing there were worldwide campaigns to stop the supply. Some European states did stop, and even the UK, one of Israel's most devoted supporters, stopped a few items.

The need for an arms boycott is as strong as ever. Israel cannot continue to terrorise the middle east without the weapons to do the job.

According to Campaign Against Arms Trade, since 2015 the UK has approved arms export licences to Israel worth over £500m. Sales include spare parts for the F35 jets (below) used to bomb Gaza.



CEASEFIRE

Tens of thousands died needlessly

The Gaza ceasefire could have been achieved more than a year earlier, saving countless lives.

The US had several times announced that agreements were close, but nothing came of them because Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu refused to co-operate.

A former US State Department official, Matthew Miller, said in August that the US had considered declaring publicly that Netanyahu was "completely intransigent" and wanted the war to continue indefinitely. It was decided to keep quiet, he said, because publicising it would help Hamas.

Israel's approach to negotiating with its adversaries was stated clearly enough on September 9 when it tried to kill the Hamas representatives taking part in talks. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) fighter jets

targeted a building in Qatar where they were staying. Six were killed.

In May 2024, just seven months into the conflict, then US President Joe Biden announced a three-stage peace plan. Hamas accepted it and the UN Security Council unanimously endorsed it, but Israel refused, carried on bombing and started a war with Lebanon.

When Israel does agree to ceasefires, it routinely breaks them. In 2024, after blitzing Beirut and wiping out the leadership of Hezbollah, it did agree to a truce.

Under this, Israeli and Hezbollah forces would withdraw from the south of Lebanon. Israeli ministers issued stern public warnings that any incursions by Hezbollah would be met with severe retribution.

But the IDF never left the area; they are there to this day, attacking

villages and from time to time shelling Beirut.

In Gaza in January this year a version of the three-stage plan finally took effect. In the second stage, after hostage exchanges, Israel was supposed to withdraw from Gaza, but instead it resumed hostilities.

Reportedly infuriated by the bombing of US ally Qatar, Trump forced Netanyahu to negotiate.

Trump still supports Israel, but he wants Netanyahu to keep his mouth shut and his murderous impulses under control while he fixes an alliance with the Arab oil states.

But Trump's "peace" plan has no mechanism to monitor or enforce compliance with its terms, and it grants Israel permanent control of Gaza's boundaries and the West Bank.

Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer speaks to service personnel at the RAF base in Akrotiri, Cyprus, in December 2024



ISRAEL AND THE WEST

UK spy planes have carried out 600 sorties over Gaza

BRITISH spyplanes circled regularly over Gaza to gather data for Israel's military campaign. Flights from the RAF base at Akrotiri in Cyprus were tracked by the website Declassified UK more than 600 times since December 2023. On occasions they landed in southern Israel.

Since the RAF sorties by Raytheon Shadow R1 reconnaissance aircraft were exposed in May 2024, many have been outsourced to an American aviation contractor. The UK Ministry of Defence said "the unarmed UK reconnaissance aircraft were employed solely for the purpose of locating the remaining hostages".

But Declassified UK said: "the extraordinary number of flights ... raises suspicions that the UK is not collecting intelligence solely for this purpose. Flights have often coincided with major offensives in Gaza."

In December 2024 Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, on a Christmas visit to the Akrotiri base, made a bizarre speech to crews in which he said "thank you" 13 times, adding strangely that "we can't necessarily tell the world what you're doing here".

This is just part of Britain's continuing support for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which includes training troops.

But Britain's is a small part of the

'The extraordinary number of flights raises suspicions. Flights have often coincided with major offensives in Gaza'

American-led military campaign for Israel, and that is only part of western support that includes economic, technological and political backing. Palestinians face the combined might of almost the entire western world.

Israel is a rich country yet it is the biggest recipient of US foreign aid. Before this war it was given £2.83 billion a year. In 2024 as the war got going Congress granted an extra £17.5 billion and this June added another £2.2 billion.

The US arms industry supplies 70% of Israel's weapons, while big tech corporations are deeply involved in Israel's security and surveillance programmes.

In effect Israel uses Palestine – the West Bank as well as Gaza – as a research laboratory. Palestinians are the most spied on people on the planet; this is one of the reasons why Israel's claims that it had no fore-knowledge of the Hamas attack of

October 7, 2023 were unconvincing.

The Israelis use CCTV networks with facial recognition capability to monitor public spaces. They have a mobile phone surveillance operation throughout the West Bank and Gaza that is claimed to be able to record a million calls an hour.

Israel promotes the Pegasus phone-hacking system developed by the NSO Group that is marketed worldwide and used by more than 40 governments to spy on their people.

Social media are constantly monitored. Israel sees everything that moves in Palestine. To store all that data it buys space on Microsoft's Azure cloud platform. A leak of Microsoft files revealed the enhanced security that has been developed on the instructions of Israel's Unit 8200 intelligence operation.

Microsoft staff protested and some took strike action at the news. Under pressure by the boycott movement and its own staff, the company withdrew its service to the unit.

Britain is a smaller donor and supplier than the US, but it hosts Israeli firms with arms factories, some – which were the focus of protests by the now-proscribed activist group Palestine Action – now closed down.

The UK suspended a small

proportion of export licences to Israel in 2024 but allows work to continue on components for the F-35A Lightning US warplanes that terrorised Gaza.

The European Union is sticking with Israel as well. The European Union has an extensive preferential trading agreement with Israel, although the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, did call for its partial suspension.

And there is an even more powerful benefit of western cooperation: Israel has nuclear weapons. Though built with French rather than American expertise in the 1960s, it has hundreds of nuclear warheads.

Israel has never been required to sign the international Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, nor to open its nuclear site at Dimona in the Naqab desert to inspection – or even to admit its existence.

Israel has not signed the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, nor opened its nuclear site to inspection

A HEROIC DOCTOR

Called to surgery during his son's funeral, he took his tears with him to the operating room

Living and working day and night at the Kamal Adwan hospital in Beit Lahia, Gaza, was hellish. Shrapnel flew into patient rooms. Nearby bombs interrupted surgeries.

"There was no way to sleep at night. We were stressed 24-7," Abdel Moneim Al-Shrafi, a nurse in his early twenties, recalled. "Streams of patients came in, but there were never enough staff or supplies."

"Some patients actually died in front of us," said Rawiya Tanboura, 32, a nurse who had worked with him since 2019, "they would have survived if they'd had surgery".

On October 25, 2024 Israeli

When his lawyer, finally saw him he was shackled, forced to kneel, and flanked by guards. She said he had several broken ribs

forces raided the hospital again. Female staff and family members were marched out and searched.

Dr. Hossam Abu Safiya, along with about 44 other staff members were taken to an outpatient clinic, beaten, and interrogated.

The following day, when Dr. Abu Safiya returned from being interrogated, he found his son had been killed.

The family buried him in the soil just outside the hospital. But, his family said, the loss only strengthened Dr. Abu Safiya's resolve.

He was called to surgery during his son's funeral. "He couldn't even take the time to grieve. He took his tears with him to the operating room."

In early October 2024 an Israel secret service officer called Dr. Abu Safiya, instructing him to leave the hospital. He refused.

On December 27, just before dawn, Israeli tanks and bulldozers encircled the hospital. Snipers took their positions. Quadcopters hovered above.

"A big tank entered and stood by reception. And it started firing. It was firing forward, firing and turning.

"And then they pointed the muzzle through the reception door and it was [pointing at] patients," Tanboura recalled.

That night Al-Shrafi and Dr. Abu Safiya and the other men were stripped to their underwear, shackled, blindfolded and marched into the bitter cold. "They humiliated us, they hit us ... They were treating us like we were terrorists," Al-Shrafi recalled.

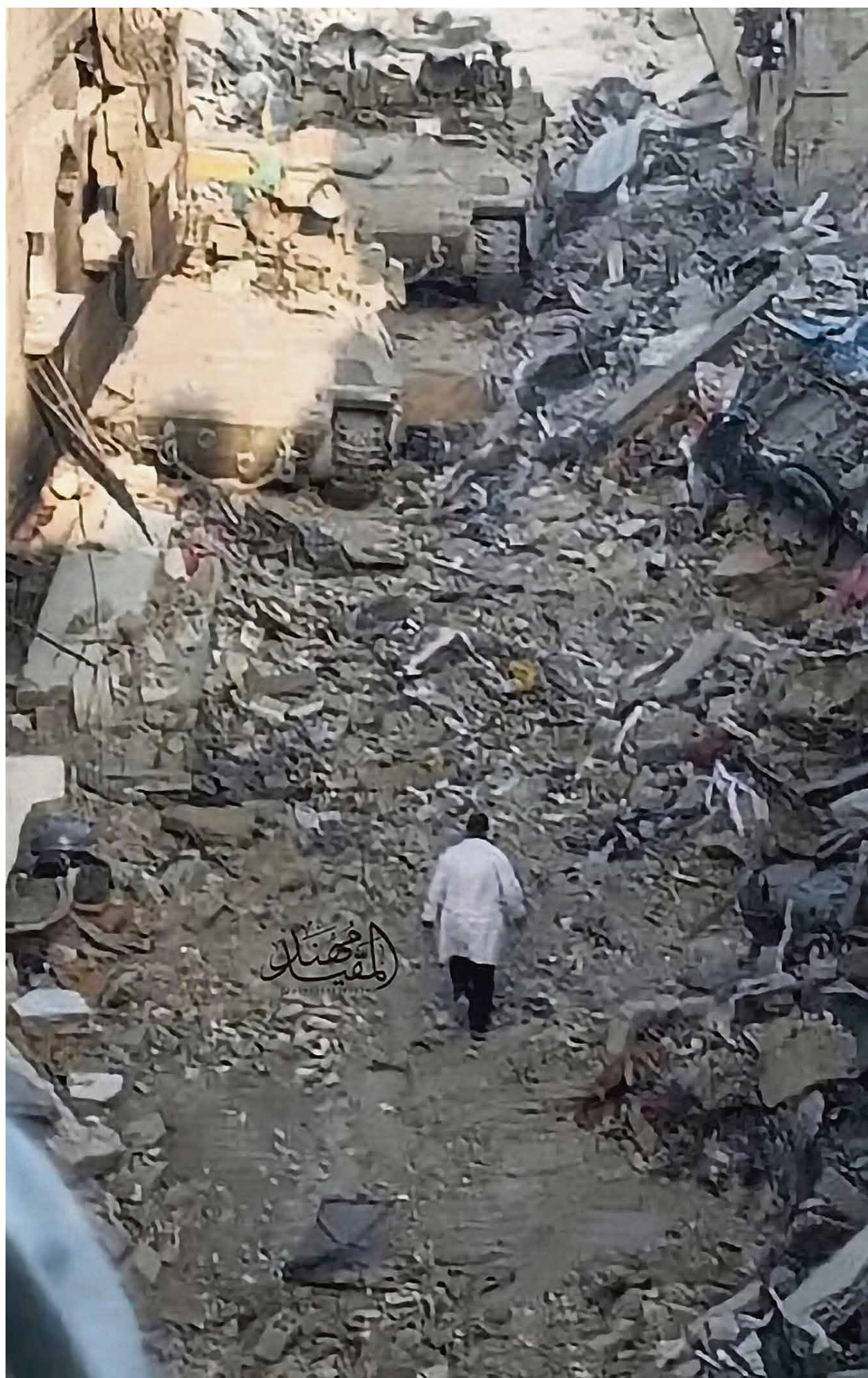
Dr. Safiya spent 25 days in solitary detention in the notorious Sde Teiman facility. He was not allowed a lawyer for 47 days.

When his lawyer, Gheed Kassem, finally saw him he was shackled, forced to kneel, and flanked by guards. Kassem said he had several broken ribs, indicating he had been beaten.

Some 150 healthcare workers from Gaza are in detention according to Healthcare Workers Watch. Four have died in Israeli custody, including Dr. Iyad al-Rantisi, the former head of obstetrics and gynaecology at Kamal Adwan.

Dr. Abu Safiya was held in Ofer prison [an Israeli military incarceration facility in the occupied West Bank] where prisoners are deprived of food and medical care. As we went to press, he had not been freed following the ceasefire. Amnesty International and others were demanding his immediate release.

■ This article is adapted from *The Disappearance of Dr. Abu Safiya*, produced by Al Jazeera's *Fault Lines*. See: youtu.be/0BFhtBk9UDc



STATEMENT BY PHYSICIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, ISRAEL

On October 13, 2023, six days after the Hamas attack of October 7, the Israeli military ordered the evacuation of 22 hospitals in Gaza City and the northern Gaza Strip.

That day marked the start of an unprecedented assault on Gaza's health system.

Israel has systematically targeted medical infrastructure across the Gaza Strip, attacking 33 of 36 of Gaza's hospitals and

clinics depriving them of fuel and water.

More than 1,800 of Gaza's medical staff have been killed or detained.

Physicians for Human Rights in Israel released a position paper that documents this assault for what it is: a deliberate, cumulative dismantling of Gaza's health system, and with it, its people's ability to survive.

This, they state, amounts to genocide. Israel's bombing of hospitals, destruction of medical equipment, and depletion of medications have made medical care – both immediate and long-term – virtually impossible.

The system has collapsed under the weight of relentless attacks and blockade.

LIFE IN AL ZAWAIDA FIELD HOSPITAL

Riccardo Defrancesco is a nurse activity manager with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and in November 2024 travelled to Gaza for the first time ...

We ran out of things like gauze, saline, paracetamol and gloves

Having worked in war zones in Afghanistan, Iraq, Sierra Leone and Libya, I felt like I had relevant experience to offer.

I supported local staff at MSF's Al Zawaida field hospital in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza. The hospital provided orthopaedic, general and plastic surgeries.

Most of the patients were civilians who were either close to explosions or whose house had been targeted directly. They came in with burns, limb fractures, amputations or abdominal injuries requiring surgery.

All the surgeons were from Gaza – in fact 95% of the 350 staff were local Palestinian. We were there just to support and facilitate.

The field hospital had been built only a few months earlier with 28 beds, seven patients per tent. The plan was to increase capacity to 70 – we had the staff, but not the supplies.

That was the main struggle: shortages. In the six weeks I was there we ran out of fundamental things like gauze, saline, paracetamol and gloves.

Saving limbs and reconstruction surgeries would normally be possible in a humanitarian setting, but here we didn't have all the instruments.

Treating burns is always hard but here we lacked some antibiotics and had no microbiology lab to test blood for bacteria. When burns – often on children – covered more than 20% of the body, the mortality rate was quite high.

Fuel was another major problem. With no power infrastructure in Gaza [Israel cut off all power supplies in March 2025 and has repeatedly destroyed power plants], a generator was the only way to produce electricity. But to service this every few months, which, in ordinary times cost around \$1,000, now cost \$50,000.

Every day we had to calculate how much electricity our essential machines needed. We couldn't shut down the blood freezer or the ICU lights, but machines to measure vital signs were replaced by manual checks.

We were not the heroes. The Palestinian nurses, doctors, surgeons, cleaners, electricians, plumbers – everyone running the hospital – were.

They came into work happy, despite being targeted, displaced every few months, and despite colleagues and family being killed and injured.

Every day we had to calculate how much electricity our essential machines needed. We couldn't shut down the blood freezer or ICU lights

Dr. Abu Safiya walks through the rubble of his hospital towards an Israeli Defense Forces tank

HAMAS

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT HAMAS ...

But Hamas is “proscribed” and banned as a terrorist organisation. It is a criminal offence under the Terrorism Act 2000, with a penalty of up to 14 years in prison, to:

- Invite support for a proscribed organisation (the support invited need not be material support, such as the provision of money or other property, and can also include moral support or approval) (*section 12(1) of the Act*)
- Express an opinion or belief that is supportive of a proscribed organisation, reckless as to whether a person to whom the expression is directed will be encouraged to support a proscribed organisation (*section 12(1A) of the Act*).

So how can Hamas be discussed without breaking the law? A clause in the legislation allows the ban to be challenged. So discussing the rights and wrongs of the ban is allowed. This article does not express support for Hamas, nor even challenge the ban; it provides the background for a discussion.

Did the elections which Hamas won in 2006 give them legitimacy and did they lose it?

In 2006 Hamas won elections across Gaza and the West Bank. International observers certified them as free and fair. Hamas opposed the Palestinian Authority (PA) which had been given some powers over the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza in the Oslo Accords of 1993.

The PA is despised by many Palestinians because it has served Israel's occupation with brutal repression of its own people. The US and the European Union financed the PA. Much of the money was used to fund security organisations. Some found its way into the pockets of officials.

Meanwhile, Hamas provided health care, education and other services. Hamas were not seen as corrupt.

How is Hamas viewed differently by Israel, the West and by Palestinians?

For Israel and most Western media, the breaking out of Gaza by Hamas on October 7 2023 began everything. It was a crime against humanity. But there is a context:

The history

In 1948, in the establishment of Israel, the populations of 19 Palestinian

villages were killed, and threequarters of a million were expelled. In 1967, when Israel took the West Bank, it expelled another one third of a million and set up a brutal military rule. Mass killings, like those in Sabra and the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut in 1982, and others, took place. Details of such massacres, and the intensification of violence by Israeli settlers in the West Bank, were largely unreported by western media, which focused on Hamas' brutality – its suicide bombing campaign of the 90s and 2000s was notorious.

Israel bombed Gaza in 2009, 2012, 2014 and 2021, killing thousands of civilians and destroying hospitals and essential services.

Israel has blockaded Gaza for 17 years, restricting food, water, medical equipment and patients leaving for treatment. Israeli forces called this “putting Gazans on a diet”. It was largely unreported in the West.

Many Palestinians see Hamas in the same light as Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, with its Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) armed wing, representing them against oppression, or like the leaders of violent rebellions by enslaved people.

Has Hamas changed over the years?

Hamas' first charter sought the replacement of Israel with an Islamic state. Its second of 2017 was a complete rewrite. It did not recognise “the Zionist state”, but it called for a Palestinian state to the east of the 1967 border. Israel and the media never quote from this later document.

How do the different sides view negotiations as a way to solving the crisis?

Over 40 years Hamas has made ceasefire deals with Israel: it held to them, Israel did not. It is prepared to negotiate. But Israel has an unusual take on diplomacy. Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, the chief ceasefire negotiator last summer, was assassinated by Israel. Negotiations were taking place in Qatar last September. Israel tried to kill the whole Hamas team by bombing the building.

One war crime does not justify another. But in history repression has generated rebellions.

‘Anyone who wants to thwart the establishment of a Palestinian state has to support bolstering Hamas and transferring money to Hamas ... This is part of our strategy – to isolate the Palestinians in Gaza from the Palestinians in the West Bank’

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the divide-and-rule policy to play off Hamas and the PA each other at the Likud Party conference in 2019
<https://x.com/haaretzcom/status/1711329340804186619>





August 2025: Palestinians carry the body of Al Jazeera correspondent Anas al-Sharif during his funeral in Gaza City, alongside other journalists and one paramedic killed in the same Israeli strike on August 11, 2025. The five other journalists killed in same attack targeting their tent outside Gaza City's Shifa Hospital complex were Al Jazeera crew members Mohammed Qreiqeh, Ibrahim Zaher, Moamen Aliwa and Mohammed Noufal, as well as freelance journalist Mohammad al-Khaldi. The killings came after months of threats to al-Sharif's life by Israeli forces

JOURNALISTS, TEACHERS, DOCTORS TARGETED

Gaza press: one in four murdered

More than 200 media workers in Gaza have been murdered in the past two years. Israel's brutal method of stopping the spread of bad news is to kill the journalists.

There used to be around 800 reporters, photographers and other media workers in the strip. At least 247 have died, according to the UN.

Many were killed in targeted attacks. Israel does not deny this; sometimes it even gloats about them.

When TV correspondent Anas al-Sharif was blown to bits with five colleagues in August – the makeshift tent they were resting in next to a hospital was bombed from a drone – the government was announcing it even before it

happened. Anas al-Sharif was a widely respected journalist. Israel said he was a Hamas commander. But all six were targeted. Four were a news camera team.

A week later the IDF did it again, killing another five at another hospital. Journalists work at hospitals because that is where victims are brought, and there are generators that can charge laptops and other equipment.

Whole families have been eliminated to intimidate reporters. Wael al-Dahdouh, head of the news bureau of the Al Jazeera TV network in Gaza, was live on air when he was told that his wife, son, daughter and grandson had been killed by an Israeli air raid.

He had been sent Israeli

messages threatening the attack. Weeks later his eldest son, also a reporter, died when his car was hit from a drone. Wael al-Dahdouh himself was badly injured in another bombing but survived.

No war has seen so many journalists killed in such a short time. A total of 228 perished in Iraq 2003-10. The Second World War saw 69 killed in six years; 76 died in Afghanistan 2001-22 and in Ukraine so far, 15.

Israel holds the record for the number killed in one strike: not in Gaza, but in Yemen. On September 16 Israel hit a newspaper office in the capital Sana'a, killing 31 journalists and four others.

Reporters banned but influencers welcomed

Assassination is only one strand of Israel's news suppression policy. The other has been to keep journalists from abroad out of Gaza altogether.

A few were "embedded" with the IDF – led on brief visits to specific sites under strict conditions, which include a ban on talking to anybody and censorship of their work.

BBC correspondent Lucy Williamson was taken to the Al-Shifa hospital to be shown weapons and laptops that the IDF told her had been left behind by a Hamas control centre in tunnels below. No independent evidence of this has been found despite the best efforts of international agencies and other media.

Williamson reported that she had not spoken to hospital staff or patients – nor to the families that she had to climb over who had been bombed out of their homes.

While reporters were banned, social media influencers were welcomed. Compliant Americans were flown in in August to dress up in military gear and make propaganda videos.

ISRAEL IS KILLING PROFESSIONALS, DESTROYING GAZA'S FUTURE

Israel's targeted killings were concentrated on professionals whose roles represent threats to its grim vision of Gaza's future.

Journalists and doctors are obvious targets. But teachers are a longer-term threat.

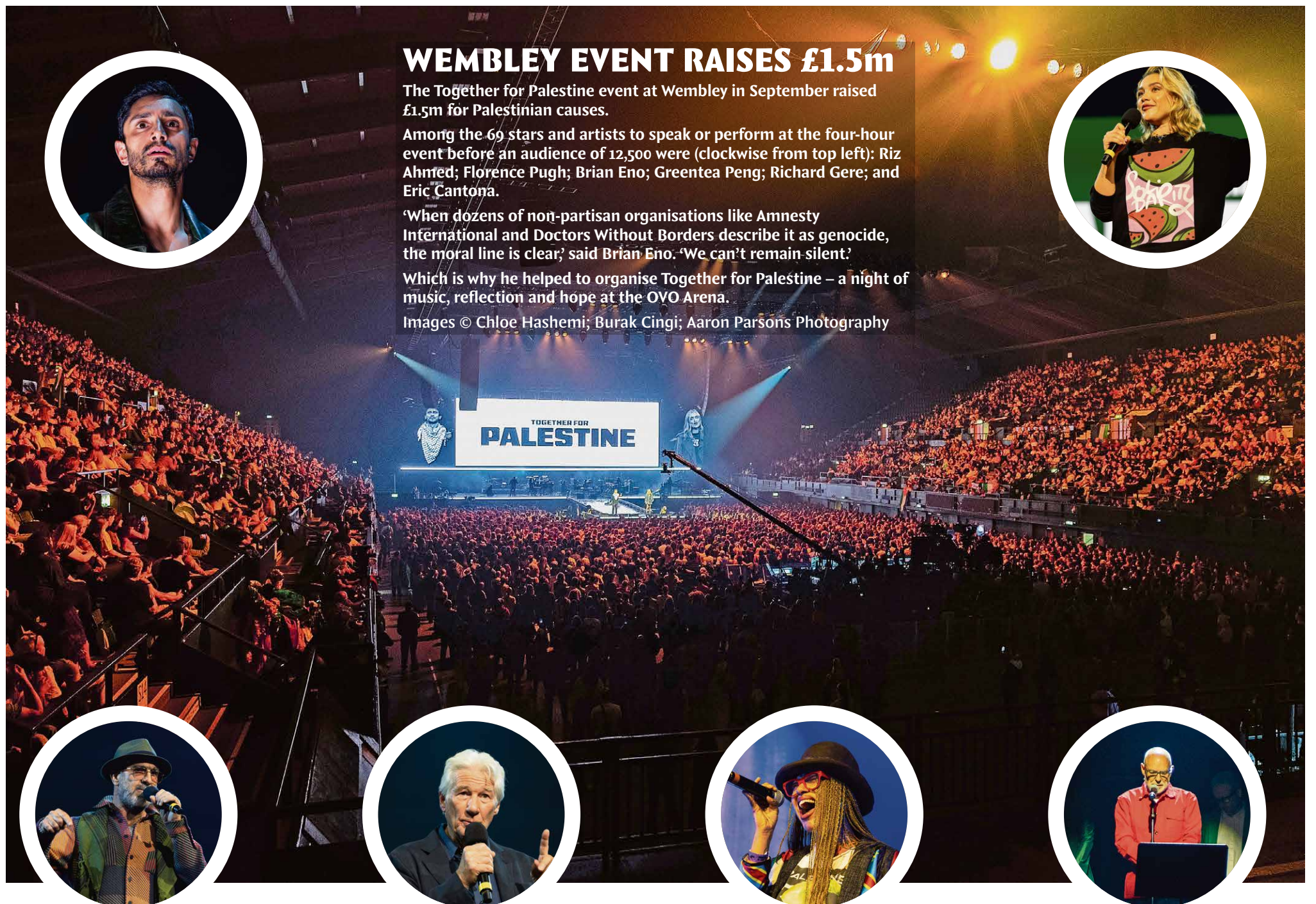
Israel's priority is to fend off continued resistance to its occupation by eliminating future generations of Gazans.

But they do not want those children who survive to learn about the history of Israeli

occupation and mistreatment of the Palestinian people.

More than 1,000 educators have been murdered: 970 school teachers and administrators, and 130 university professors and researchers. Even worse hit are medical staff.

At the end of August 2025 the Palestine ministry of health reported at least 1,581 health workers had been killed in Gaza since October 7 2023. Replacing medical specialists who have been killed takes years of training.



WEMBLEY EVENT RAISES £1.5m

The Together for Palestine event at Wembley in September raised £1.5m for Palestinian causes.

Among the 69 stars and artists to speak or perform at the four-hour event before an audience of 12,500 were (clockwise from top left): Riz Ahmed; Florence Pugh; Brian Eno; Greentea Peng; Richard Gere; and Eric Cantona.

‘When dozens of non-partisan organisations like Amnesty International and Doctors Without Borders describe it as genocide, the moral line is clear,’ said Brian Eno. ‘We can’t remain silent.’

Which is why he helped to organise Together for Palestine – a night of music, reflection and hope at the OVO Arena.

Images © Chloe Hashemi; Burak Cingi; Aaron Parsons Photography

PALESTINE ACTION

Heroines from history and today’s terrorists – spot the difference

Yvette Cooper, then home secretary, in July gave public support to a campaign whose supporters smashed windows in London’s Regent Street, torched mail in pillar boxes, and sent letter bombs to leading politicians.

She even posed for pictures in Parliament wearing the campaigners’ colours.

Sanctified by 100 years of history, the heroic suffragettes Cooper was celebrating are today a safe cause for politicians to praise.

But on the very day of her demonstration of support for the suffragettes, she made an order banning the activist group Palestine Action on the grounds that it is a terrorist organisation.

Expressing support for the group is illegal, but the Terrorism Act 2000 contains the right to challenge the ban.

So discussing the ban is allowed. The objectives of Palestine Action,

as reported to the government by the security services, are to attack property and, as a principle, not to inflict violence on people.

Their target was the supply of weapons used by Israel in its attacks, which killed thousands of civilians including babies, women, medics, aid workers and journalists in Gaza and the West Bank.

A knock-on effect of the ban has been the arrest of people demonstrating against the genocide in Gaza, calling for Palestinian freedom or criticising the acts of Israel as those reminiscent of fascism. Police officers

have told people they arrest on such grounds that these are Palestine Action slogans.

A Palestine support group which sends aid, like baby formula, to Gaza has had its bank account frozen!

Civil rights organisations and leading lawyers, in the UK and internationally, including the United Nations, have condemned the ban on Palestine Action. They say it is a gross violation of UN and European conventions on human rights and an unprecedented attack on civil rights. UK public opinion polls back them up.

We have seen the ludicrous spectacle of police arresting hundreds of demonstrators, many in their 70s and 80s, holding “I

support Palestine Action” signs and protesting the destruction of our democratic freedoms.

Why did the home secretary do this when there are plenty of laws already for prosecuting people who damage property?

One answer might be that juries were consistently returning not guilty verdicts on Palestine Action members, on the basis that their crimes were committed to prevent far greater ones.

Even the prime minister Sir Keir Starmer, when he was a human rights lawyer, in 2003 successfully defended a woman who took a hammer to fighter bomber parts bound for Iraq.

Now he has banned Palestine Action for doing similar things. Could it have been because the government was about to sign a £2 billion contract with Israeli weapons company Elbit Systems, Palestine Action’s main target?





The uncle of three-month-old Fadi Al-Najjar holds his body after he died of malnutrition, at the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip, July 19, 2025

DOAA ALBAZ/ACTIVESTILLS

GAZA NIGHTMARE

FROM PAGE 1

decimated, making survival a daily struggle. Should the ceasefire hold – and some Israeli ministers have vowed that it will not – what of the future? The root cause of the violence is the occupation of Palestinian land. Even as Gaza was being bombed, illegal settlers in the West Bank stole ever more land from Palestinians as Israeli soldiers looked on – or joined in. In spite of the 20-point peace plan, Israeli

premier Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly stated that there never will be a Palestinian state. In the plan there is no mention of withdrawal from the West Bank. Gazans are required to hand over all weapons. The proposed Palestinian state is to be demilitarised. But there is no mention of Israel giving up a single gun. It is clear that foreign bigwigs will be running the new state – leaders of other Arab countries, Trump himself and possibly Tony Blair, active supporter of the illegal invasion of Iraq. If and when power is handed over to Palestinians, it will be others who choose the new overlords, regardless of whom Palestinians want.

DIVIDE AND CONQUER

A gang responsible for looting aid deliveries to Gaza wants to be its next government, says Sky News. The channel’s investigative team has been tracking the Popular Forces gang. Members collaborated with the notorious Gaza Humanitarian Foundation which was supposed to deliver aid to Gaza during the Israeli-engineered famine. Hundreds were shot dead as they queued for food, but the gang lived in luxury off diverted aid. Israel allowed Popular Forces to run a cigarette-smuggling racket. “Experts say that Israel’s support for such groups is intended to ‘divide and conquer’ and to ensure that it maintains a level of control in Gaza, whatever its future,” the report concluded.

WIDE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR BOYCOTT

Spain’s prime minister Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón called for Israel to be banned from international sport. Spain and the Netherlands both banned ships and planes carrying weapons for Israel and trade with Israeli settlements. Ursula von der Leyen, president of the European Commission, called for the suspension of Israel from parts of the EU Association Trade Agreement, which accounts for a third of Israel’s exports. Turkey suspended all trade with Israel and closed its ports and airspace to Israeli craft carrying military equipment until aid was allowed in to Gaza. Ireland, Slovenia, Iceland, Netherlands, and Spain’s national broadcast company are threatening to pull out of Eurovision Song Contest if Israel competes. Ireland is boycotting Israeli government bonds. Pension Denmark, one of the biggest pension funds in Denmark (with 800,000 members), has withdrawn all its investments from Israeli banks. Norway’s sovereign wealth fund is one of the world’s largest and completely divested from Israel bonds in November last year. Many companies are quietly deciding not to invest in Israel, like Intel, which halted a \$25 billion investment at Kiryat Gat.

WHAT YOU CAN DO – GENERAL AND SPECIFIC BOYCOTT ACTION

IN THE SUPERMARKET Don’t buy Israeli food products – Israel uses famine as a weapon, many companies play a direct role in the theft of Palestinian land and Israel’s violations of international law. Easy targets: avocados, oranges, medjool dates, humous. Note: Israel often disguises the origin of foods. If in doubt use the apps ‘Boycat’ or ‘No Thanks’ to scan the barcode. Coca Cola owns Coca Cola Israel, based in occupied east Jerusalem. Israel diverts water supplies from Gaza and the West Bank, and drastically reduces drinking water supplies to them. The

production of one litre of Coca Cola requires 35 litres of water. **ON THE HIGH STREET** Don’t buy Dell computers, they provide the internet server and information storage system for the Israel Defense Forces. **ON THE INTERNET** Don’t use Airbnb or booking.com – they market accommodation in the illegal settlements. ■ For more information scan the QR code

