URGENT ACTION

OVER 4000 ARRESTED FOR PEACEFUL PROTEST

On 4 and 5 November, the UK Supreme Court heard the judicial review of the proscription of the action group, Palestine Action, with the outcome expected late 2026 or early 2027. Since the proscription, the grassroots campaigning group 'Defend our Juries' has organised peaceful protests throughout the UK, with supporters engaging in peaceful civil disobedience against the proscription and the draconian speech restrictions that came with it. The latest actions, on 27 September and 31 October, led to further arrests. In total over 4000 arrests have been carried out under the Terrorism legislation, and the number of total charges brought against peaceful protesters are at at least 634 but have been reported to be as high as 2200.

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 Ruth Charteris KC
Email: LordAdvocate@gov.scot

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

I am writing to raise ongoing concern for the prosecution of the peaceful grassroots campaigning group ***Defend our Juries (DOJ).***

On 4 and 5 November, the UK Supreme Court heard the judicial review, (the legal process in which the court examine whether an action by a public body was lawful), of the proscription of the UK-based direct-action movement, Palestine Action, with the outcome expected late 2026 or early 2027. In the months preceding the Supreme Court hearing, DOJ has continued its campaign against the proscription. Most recently, peaceful protests took place on 27 September in Liverpool and 31 October in London at which over 380 people were arrested for peacefully displaying placards that stated the message 'I oppose Genocide, I support Palestine Action'.

Since the ban against Palestine Action came into effect on 5 July 2025, over 4000 arrests of protesters have taken place across the UK simply for their engagement in acts of peaceful protest opposing the proscription. The majority of these arrests have taken place during or soon after peaceful protests organised by Defend our Juries, at 18 of which Amnesty International deployed protest observers. To date, hundreds of individuals across the UK have been formally charged with terrorism-related offences under section 12 or section 13 of the UK's 2000 Terrorism Act. In total at least 634 charges have been brought against peaceful protesters, however the reported number of charges has been reported as high as 2200, and concerns remain that more charges will continue to be brought against the arrested protesters by prosecutorial authorities.

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, professing membership or inviting support for the group does not in itself meet this threshold.

I urge you to uphold the UK's human rights commitments by dropping the charges and not pursuing prosecutions against all those who have 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 have organised multiple mass actions of peaceful disobedience expressing opposition to the proscription of 'Palestine Action'.

Peaceful protests have been organised since the UK government's proscription of 'Palestine Action' as a 'terrorist group', which started in November 2025 and then continued 2 December 2025. Several other protests and mass actions were organized throughout 2026, including after 15 June 2026 when the Court of Appeal ruled that the Government's decision to proscribe Palestine Action as a 'terrorist organisation' was lawful. This decision overturned the previous ruling by the High Court in February 2026 which found that the proscription was unlawful. Since then, on 30 July 2026, the UK's Supreme Court granted permission to Palestine Action to appeal the Court of Appeal's decision, the case as heard on 4 and 5 November 2026, and we're now awaiting the Court's decision.

The vast majority of the protests organized by DoJ in relation to the proscription consist of people holding signs stating 'I oppose genocide. I support Palestine Action'. Following the decision of the Court of Appeal in June 2026, DoJ continued their campaigning opposing the proscription with supporters making statements online and in person that they are members of Palestine Action, and in some cases encouraging others to join.

Initially, the majority of the protesters holding signs were arrested under section 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000. This criminal provision brings risk of up to six months in prison. The arrests of peaceful protesters for displaying the message 'I Oppose Genocide. I Support Palestine Action' violates UK's international obligations to protect freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Amnesty International also considers, based on applicable regional and international human rights law that UK is bound by, that 'professing' to be a member of Palestine Action, or inviting support for the group, especially in the context of a peaceful political campaign opposing the proscription and its damaging consequences for freedom of expression in the UK, should not be a criminal offence.

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 a 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. 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: 6 January 2027
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/eur45/1370/2026/en/