

# UK Parliament Foreign Affairs Inquiry on Committee the “Israeli Palestinian Conflict”

Response to Call for Evidence

Written evidence submitted by Greens for Palestine (IPC0086)

## Introduction

The Green Party BDS group has organised as an informal group of members of Green Party England & Wales and provided briefings to members and elected members in support of our long standing policy to take a leading role in Boycotts, Divestments & Sanctions. The Group re-named itself Greens for Palestine and then was replaced by another group also called Greens for Palestine. The group has organised a presence at marches in the capital, alongside the Climate Justice Bloc which brings together climate justice activists for Palestine. As the sitting Labour MP Thangham Debbonaire did not vote for the SNP motion to back a ceasefire, the Green Party unseated her and won Bristol Central with the new MP Carla Denyer who is the co-leader of the Green Party of England & Wales. The party also took City Hall, with a diverse slate of councillors elected as the city’s biggest party. Councillors who attracted heavy criticism were re-elected winning the most votes, vindicating an insurgent, diverse Green Party to represent the people who care about Palestine and international affairs. The First Past the Post system has put the party at a disadvantage and it is under-represented in proportion to the number of votes received. The Party contains a number of diversity groups such as the Jewish Greens and most recently officially welcomed a new group the Muslim Greens, both of which included some of the party’s most famous elected councillors.

### *Note Committee Request:*

*Include an introduction to you or your organisation and your reason for submitting evidence  
We encourage members of underrepresented groups to submit written evidence. We aim to  
have diverse panels of Select Committee witnesses and ask organisations to bear this in  
mind when we ask them to choose a representative. We are currently monitoring the  
diversity of our witnesses.*

## Opening Statement

Since the General Election the mainstream media has continued to platform Farage with his very few MPs and Councillors but after millions of Green Party and pro Gaza Independent votes the BBC and Ofcom have not given the same platform. In our non proportional electoral system the Green Party has 4 MPs and over 800 principal authority councillors. Some of these councillors have acted locally and nationally, and seek to represent their people, who are largely caring, compassionate and broad minded citizens of the world. Our planet is burning, yet our foreign policy has thrown fuel on the fire, for example sending key parts of F 35 Jets to Israel, via our military bases in the region. In opposition, Labour have taken various positions, yet in Government, David Lammy cancelled his presence at

the Labour Friends of Palestine event at his party conference. The leader then said that Israel in starving and cutting off Gaza's water has the right to defend herself; remarks echoed by Emily Thornberry. The legal advice has still not been published, or took very long, while Elbit systems and other weapons factories have found it very difficult to get the staff, in what has been termed the people's arms embargo.

*Set context, especially as FAC calls this a conflict.*

What is our guiding principle? What do we stand for? This will be the underlying thrust of our submission - eg empathy, human rights, equality, decolonisation

## Question 1

### What can – and should – the UK do, in cooperation with regional and international partners, to help bring about a ceasefire?

- 1, At the European Green Party congress that took place in December 2024 in Dublin, Ireland, the Green Party of England & Wales (GPEW) led the passing of a resolution on Peace in the Middle East.
2. We have called for unconditional release of hostages, a ceasefire, an end to arms sales to Israel. We recognise Israel's response as grossly disproportionate, and tantamount to a plausible genocide, as the International Court of Justice has established. This was endorsed by the entire European Green family.
3. The UK government is a prominent member of the United Nations and a long-standing stakeholder in Middle Eastern affairs. The UK has both a moral obligation and a strategic interest in fostering peace and compliance with international law. By working with regional and international partners, the UK can play an important role in bringing about a ceasefire. This requires an approach that leverages the UK's political, economic, and military influence while addressing the immediate humanitarian crisis and laying the groundwork for a lasting peace.
4. The continuation of violence in the region is underpinned by systemic violations of international law. The Israeli government's policies, including the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories as detailed in UN Resolution 2334 (2016), and its actions in Gaza, which amount to collective punishment, must be challenged. The UK must publicly insist that Israel end its attacks on hospitals, schools, universities and other civilian infrastructure, as it has called on groups like Hamas to cease indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations. And the UK must insist on humanitarian aid being allowed a safe passage to those Palestinians communities who need it right now. A balanced and firm stance against all breaches of international law will strengthen the UK's credibility as a mediator.
5. To bring about a ceasefire, the UK should immediately suspend military support and arms sales to Israel while it remains in violation of international law. This includes halting the sharing of military intelligence. These measures, implemented in coordination with EU nations and other allies, would signal to the Israeli government that its so far unchecked aggression carries significant costs. Such pressure should be coupled with assurances that cultural, economic and military relations will resume only when Israel demonstrates compliance with international law, including the end of the occupations of the West Bank and Golan Heights, and the removal of illegal settlements constructed in those territories.

6. Simultaneously, the UK must ensure that humanitarian aid reaches Palestinian civilians. This requires diplomatic efforts to secure safe corridors for aid delivery and cooperation with international organizations such as UNRWA to address the acute needs of the civilian population in Gaza and the West Bank.

7. The UK must stop allowing Akrotiri in Cyprus to be used as staging ground for US weapons supplies. We must challenge US complicity in the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

8. While securing a ceasefire is the immediate priority, sustainable peace requires addressing the historic context of the conflict. The UK should support grassroots peacebuilding efforts, and promote an outcome that guarantees self-determination for all people in the region.

9. The UK has the tools and alliances necessary to play a key role in bringing about a ceasefire in Palestine. By leveraging its diplomatic prowess and economic power the UK can push for an immediate end to hostilities. Working in cooperation with regional and international partners, the UK must act decisively to uphold international law, protect civilian lives, and create a legacy by paving the way for a lasting peace.

## Question 2

### What can be learned from the record of UK Government policies to date?

1. The UK Government has called for a ceasefire in words but the actions of the Government have provided vital cover diplomatically and intangibly without which the numbers of civilian deaths would have been significantly fewer.
2. We must not underestimate the substantive reputational damage inflicted on our National body politic by our governments facilitation of Israel's war on the civilian population of Gaza. Our politicians' and legacy media's insistence on commencing the narrative on 7 October continues to corrode trust in the system. Furthermore it provides grounds for our amateur and clumsy attempts to justify Israel's actions and floutings of International law.
3. We as a society are nearing a point of no return where many communities are disenfranchised from the concept of fair application of law, trust in governance and leadership, national stakeholding and shared British values. It is widely perceived that our foreign policy is subjugated to a narrow section of interest groups and we as a nation are part of the problem internationally. This view is increasingly held by those on the right and left of the political spectrum. In such an environment we know that historical shocks, such as Brexit or the divisions that gave rise to the Summer riots of 2024, become increasingly likely. The full consequences of the British Governments enablement of the Israeli occupation will be felt significantly in the UK for years to come.
4. Currently in the UK, colonialism and empire building are seen and taught as historical phenomena which we have moved beyond by recognising for so many former colonies their autonomy and awarding them liberation. One would therefore hope that an ethos of post-

colonial equality amongst nations and decolonisation in every form would be an aspiration worth aiming for. It's imperative that going forward, we have the moral backbone to see and call Israel's brazen expansionism as exactly that.

5. One of the most telling lessons brought home from the European Green Party congress has been the leadership that has been bottom-up rather than top-down. At this moment, the Green Party leadership have been listening to the Jewish community such as our own members Jewish Greens, and movement groups such as Na'amod, a UK based Jewish group that opposes the occupation while championing Judaism. The German Government (in which at the time of writing the German Green Party is a junior coalition member responsible for foreign policy) should support Jewish Groups and listen to them rather than acting in their name and in the name of the Holocaust as it supports its ally Israel.

6. The UK has at times taken strong stances in support of international law, such as voting in favor of UN resolutions condemning illegal settlements. However, continuing arms sales to parties it acknowledges is breaking international law, has undermined the UK's credibility as an impartial party.

7. While maintaining a close relationship with Israel has been a cornerstone of UK policy, insufficient engagement with Palestinian representatives and regional actors has limited the UK's influence.

8. UK policies have often focused on managing immediate crises rather than addressing underlying issues such as the occupation, settlements, and socio-economic disparities. Lasting peace requires tackling these structural drivers of conflict.

### Question 3

How can the UK assure the resilience of efforts to bring about a lasting peace at a time of uncertainty caused by conflicts elsewhere and changes in leadership in the international community?

1. First and foremost, we must right a historic wrong by recognising Palestine as a sovereign state with voting rights at the UN General Assembly.

2. The UK's role in historically displacing Palestinians and being party to their dehumanisation now must be courageously acknowledged and apologised for. Palestine must take her place as a free and equal nation at the United Nations.

3. The UK is sending weapons components to Israel for the very F35 jets which are bombing Gaza as are the US and Germany. We must leverage our friendship with the US to insist it joins the international legal treaties such as the ICJ. Since our own country is already a member, we need to uphold international law or we risk complicity in these crimes and atrocities. International law is devalued if it is applied differently in different situations.
4. Journalists must be allowed to report, document and publish evidence from Historic Palestine.
5. We must make a coordinated effort to apprehend, arrest and prosecute Israeli war criminals.
6. Severing academic ties with Israeli universities in Israel and in all Occupied Palestinian territories is a must, particularly after Israel deliberately decimated Gaza's education institutions.
7. The militarised, right wing and fascist nature of Israeli society has to be recognised.
8. We must recognise the apartheid, racist nature of Israel's judicial system and ensure all Palestinian children in arbitrary detention are released immediately.
9. We must encourage all survivors of the occupation to have access to trauma specialists, medical staff and therapists once ceasefire is established and Gaza's blockade is lifted.
10. UK citizens and other refugees should be given visas to study and train in the UK whilst Palestine is rebuilt. The UK has a moral and legal duty to assist significantly in this rebuilding effort. The UK Government has condemned President Putin for his attack on the Ukrainian people. We have expressed solidarity with white, Christian people "like us". But the horrific violence meted out to Palestinians deserves to be called out also and our solidarity with them publicly declared. The longer our silence persists, the starker the difference in the treatment of non white victims of occupation and ethnic cleansing, by Great Britain.
11. The UK must work within international frameworks to support grassroots peacebuilding efforts. In a multi-polar world marked by shifting US priorities and the rise of China as a global power, the best way to assure the resilience of peace efforts is to support the development of Palestinian governance structures and civil society organizations that promote dialogue, human rights, and economic development. The UK must work with regional institutions like the Arab League to reduce the risk of setbacks due to changing global geopolitics, and ensure there are local and regional groups with the technical and financial capabilities of addressing the systemic causes of conflict.

*31<sup>st</sup> December 2024*