

Public Condemnation, Secret Support: The UK's True Face in the Gaza War



On July 21, 2025, British Foreign Secretary David Lammy stood before the House of Commons to deliver a lengthy statement condemning Israel's crimes in Gaza, including the targeting of starving civilians. Yet, his words were met with a storm of fierce criticism.

One Labour MP shouted, "We want action, not words!" Another asked, "Is this really all we can offer in response to such massacres?" A third added, "At what point does our humanity compel us to act more forcefully? Many of us believe the red line was crossed long ago."

A tense atmosphere hung over Parliament, where the majority refused to accept statements without action. Some accused Lammy of "complicity through inaction," warning that his failure to act could land him before the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Lammy tried to deflect the outrage: "Raising my voice won't end this war. I regret that deeply. But am I certain the British government is doing everything it can? Yes. I am."

This stands in stark contrast to the UK's declared stance at the start of the war. In the wake of Hamas's October 7th assault, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak declared

unwavering support for Israel, denouncing the attack as “barbaric” and affirming Israel’s right to defend itself.

In an unusual display of political unity, then-Opposition Leader Keir Starmer echoed Sunak’s sentiment, calling it “the darkest day in Jewish history since the Holocaust” and accusing Hamas of wanting to inflict Jewish suffering. “We stand with Israel,” he said.

On April 9, 2024, then-Foreign Secretary David Cameron explicitly stated that the UK would not halt arms sales to Israel—a decision met with sharp criticism from rights groups, including Human Rights Watch, which warned that such support could render the UK complicit in war crimes and genocide.

Despite recent, half-hearted steps to save face internationally—such as suspending 30 of 350 export licenses for the 2024 fiscal year—the British government has remained largely silent about the deeper military, intelligence, and security assistance provided to Israel. This silence points to complicity in what many view as a genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

Investigations by British media have exposed this covert support network, operating behind front companies with London as a key hub. These revelations prompted former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn to call for a full inquiry—similar to the Chilcot Inquiry into the Iraq War citing the British public’s right to know the extent of their government’s involvement in alleged crimes against humanity.

Military Ties: The Case of RUK Advanced Systems

In a quiet suburb of London sits the registered office of RUK Advanced Systems Ltd, a UK-based company that presents itself as “designing the future.” Behind its polished facade, however, lie direct ties to Israel’s Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, a weapons manufacturer established in 1948 and now the technological arm of Israel’s Ministry of Defense. Rafael develops sophisticated weapons, including missiles and drones, regularly used in Gaza.

Investigative outlet Declassified UK visited RUK’s official address in Finchley, North London, only to find a private school. Staff confirmed RUK only rents a small, inactive office. The reporters raised an obvious question: How can a company allegedly producing cutting-edge weaponry operate from an inactive office in a school? Within 12 hours of their inquiries, RUK’s website vanished, and its legal status changed, deepening the mystery.

Another address linked to RUK, this one in Central London under the name ARKAS BV, was found to be abandoned and closed for six years. Yet this “British” company is, in fact, owned by Israel’s Ministry of Finance—led by extremist minister Bezalel Smotrich, who is under British sanctions. Documents confirm

the company specializes in producing missiles used in Israeli attacks on Gaza. These so-called offices are merely legal facades designed to bypass regulations or present an illusion of British identity. In reality, they provide critical military supplies to Israel's war effort against Palestinian civilians.

Security Normalization: The RCDS Example

British complicity isn't limited to arms exports. It extends to training Israeli officers through elite institutions like the Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS) in London. Declassified UK found that Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) officers had enrolled in RCDS training programs amid accusations that Israel is committing war crimes in Gaza.

This raises sharp questions about the UK's role: Is it simply hosting an academic program, or is it helping to reproduce a military elite accused of grave violations? RCDS promotes "military soft power," forging global networks among future military leaders.

Beyond technical training, the participation of Israeli officers at RCDS serves to normalize Israel's image as a legitimate state actor, integrating them into international military networks. Upon returning to Israel, these officers often rise to high-ranking positions, bringing British strategic expertise into Israel's military operations—including its campaigns against Palestinians.

Intelligence and Logistical Support

A monitoring analysis by Al Jazeera's fact-checking unit "Sanad" tracked over 6,000 military flights in the region between October 7, 2023, and October 2024. Data from RadarBox revealed nearly 1,900 military cargo flights—over 70% of which were destined for Cyprus, Greece, and Italy, all used as forward operating bases for Israeli operations. Others flew directly to Tel Aviv.

Britain topped the list for reconnaissance missions, responsible for over 47% of such flights. Many involved Shadow R1 surveillance aircraft, equipped with advanced sensors capable of real-time ground monitoring and target tracking.

Reports suggest that these flights supported Israeli intelligence in selecting bombing targets, tracking resistance leaders, and identifying the locations of hostages. Some of the most advanced aircraft, like the P-8 Poseidon, operated from British-controlled bases in Cyprus and Greece.

Political Lobbying: The LFI Connection

Britain's support for Israel also takes a political form through groups like Labour Friends of Israel (LFI), a powerful pro-Israel lobby within the ruling Labour Party. The group, which has grown in influence since the Gaza war began, now includes

75 MPs—about 20% of the party.

According to Declassified UK, LFI received over £180,000 in donations, including direct funding from the Israeli government and figures like billionaire Trevor Chinn. Fifteen MPs accepted trips to Tel Aviv funded by pro-Israel sources.

RUK Advanced Systems Ltd—linked to Rafael—reportedly sponsors LFI. Intriguingly, its donation totaled £1,499—just £1 below the legal threshold requiring disclosure, raising suspicions of intentional legal evasion.

A Pattern of Complicity

These investigations lay bare the UK's direct role in aiding Israel's Gaza campaign—from concealing the true ownership of arms firms to permitting elite military training and offering extensive intelligence support. Despite public condemnations by figures like Keir Starmer and David Lammy, British institutions continue to empower Israel's military.

New laws designed to limit foreign influence in the UK have done little to check the power of LFI. The lack of investigation into the group's funding and actions undermines claims of transparency and highlights a two-faced policy: public denunciation of Israeli actions coupled with behind-the-scenes assistance.

Calls for Accountability

In a June 2 Guardian op-ed, Jeremy Corbyn insisted that the British people have a right to know the extent of their government's involvement in alleged crimes against humanity. He called for a parliamentary inquiry akin to the 2016 Chilcot Report, demanding transparency on British arms exports, military base use, and intelligence sharing since October 2023.

Corbyn expressed outrage that the UK continues to arm a country whose prime minister is wanted by the International Criminal Court. He called for answers about the role of British bases in Cyprus, and the nature of intelligence handed to Israel. To date, the government has stonewalled all such inquiries.

With mounting evidence, the UK's complicity in Israeli war crimes becomes harder to deny. The recent steps by the Starmer government—such as suspending minor trade deals and sanctioning select Israeli settlers—amount to little more than political theater. As more leaks expose these covert operations, the masks are falling, and Britain's role in the Gaza war grows increasingly difficult to obscure.