

ICJP 2024 General Election Manifesto Demands

The International Centre of Justice for Palestinians has outlined the following eleven demands for political parties to include in their manifestos ahead of the 2024 General Election. Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs) should also outline their willingness and intention to seek to hold the government to account to implement these demands.

These manifesto demands are not only essential for justice and compliance with international humanitarian law but also for the advancement of global peace and security. It is in the United Kingdom's interest that its government upholds the principles of the rules-based order and complies with international humanitarian law.

- 1. Immediate and Permanent Ceasefire in Gaza:** Call for the immediate cessation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip. An immediate and permanent ceasefire must be established to prevent further loss of life and to create a conducive environment for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.
 - This is obliged by the legally binding United Nations Security Council Resolution 2728 (2024).

- 2. Release of Detainees:** Call for an immediate exchange of Palestinian prisoners and Israeli hostages, both of whom have been taken captive and subjected to inhumane treatment in manners contrary to international law. Such an exchange promotes a step towards reconciliation and peace, which would also require inquiries into practices of administrative detention, including detention of children, and allegations of torture.
 - The taking of hostages is prohibited under Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions (1949); the Fourth Geneva Convention (A.34 & 147) (1949); Additional Protocols I (A.75(2)) and II (A.4(2))(1977); and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (A.8(2) (1998).
 - Under human rights law, the deprivation of liberty results in violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1954).
 - The alleged use of torture under administrative detention would constitute violations of the Convention Against Torture (1984), while detention of children violates the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990).

- 3. Commitment to the Genocide Convention, including at the International Court of Justice (ICJ):** An unwavering commitment to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention).





The UK must take proactive measures to prevent genocide, protect populations at risk, and hold accountable those who attempt to incite or commit acts of genocide. This includes providing support for the independence and authority of the ICJ in its attempts to do ensure adherence to the Genocide Convention, including formal intervention by the United Kingdom to assist in just outcome in *South Africa v Israel*.

- These obligations are enshrined in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1951); the ICJ's authority on the matter established in Article IX of that Convention.

4. Advocacy at the International Criminal Court (ICC): Encourage the enforcement of imminent ICC arrest warrants against Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant, and support the pursuit of arrest warrants against other senior Israeli officials who are suspected of war crimes in Gaza. The UK government should affirm its commitment to the International Criminal Court and bolster the ICC's ability to conduct an independent investigation into the situation in Palestine without interference. The UK must also provide the ICC with any evidence it may have collected, and with diplomatic support in the face of efforts by actors seeking to undermine the Court.

- As a State Party to the Rome Statute (1998), the UK has a positive obligation to support the ICC investigations and prosecutions, and any attempts to subvert the Court's process or unduly influence Court officials could result in prosecution under Art. 70 of the Rome Statute.

5. Accountability for Complicity in War Crimes: The British police should be empowered to investigate, arrest, and prosecute any British citizens, or any other individuals under their jurisdiction, who are suspected of complicity in war crimes perpetrated by Israel, including participating in activities with the Israeli Defence Forces.

- Mandated under both international and domestic law, as the International Criminal Court Act (2001) brings Rome Statute crimes, including war crimes, into domestic UK law.

6. Commitment to the Geneva Conventions: Ensure the UK upholds its obligation to "respect and ensure respect" for international humanitarian law, as outlined in the Common Article 1 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions.

- The Geneva Conventions Act (1957) implements grave breaches of that Convention into domestic UK law.





- 7. Root-and-branch reform of arms export regulations:** Not only should UK exports of arms to Israel have ceased months ago, but their continued non-suspension highlights the glaring gaps in arms export regulations. The current export licensing regime should be scrapped, replaced with one which recognises and respects the obligations, including the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and Geneva Conventions, to which the UK is signatory.
- Binding obligations under Articles 6 and 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty (2013) and criteria 1 and 2 of UK's Strategic Export Licensing Criteria prevent the UK from transferring military equipment and technology where there is a clear overriding risk that such equipment might be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international law.
- 8. Commitment to funding UNRWA:** The UK should commit to funding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in order to ensure it does not risk complicity in Israel using starvation as a weapon of war in the context of imminent famine in Gaza.
- Although funding to UN agencies is voluntary, the UK is a party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1976), which includes the right to adequate food, amongst other rights. As such, Article 11(2) ICESCR talks about international cooperation and to ensure freedom from hunger to everyone as a core obligation.
 - The role of UN agencies, including UNRWA, in the delivery of aid to Gaza was reaffirmed in the International Court of Justice's indication of additional provisional measures in South Africa v Israel on 28th March 2024.
- 9. Commitment to preventing annexation and freedom from occupation:** We call for decisive actions against occupation, settlement, and annexation of Palestinian and Syrian territories by Israel, which undermine prospects of peace and violate international law.
- Measures to be taken include enhanced sanctioning against Israeli settlers, along with financial oversight to anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism regulations to ensure that no financial or institutional support is inadvertently provided for activities that breach international humanitarian law concerning Israel. Continued respect for the non-recognition of annexed territory, and steps to end settlement activities, are vital.
- Settlements: The illegality of Israeli settlements was established under the legally binding United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016), which determined Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem to be flagrant violations of international law.



- United Nations Security Council Resolution 497 (1981), likewise, establishes the illegality of attempted annexation by Israel of the Syrian Golan Heights.
- Domestic law regarding financial support: Proceeds of Crime Act 2002; SAMLA 2018 (and specifically the human rights and anti-corruption sanctions regime).
- Regarding Israel's occupation:
 - It is accepted within international law that Palestine is occupied by Israel, and that this occupation has become protracted in contravention of Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) and Hague Regulations (1907).
 - The International Court of Justice is hearing an ongoing case (advisory opinion) on the legal obligations arising from occupation of Palestine.

10. Recognition of the State of Palestine: The United Kingdom ought to follow European partners in unilateral and immediate recognition of the State of Palestine as a sovereign entity, which is essential for the stability and peace of the region.

11. Formal state apology for the Balfour Declaration and Colonial Violence under Mandatory Rule: The United Kingdom ought to make a formal apology for their issuing of the Balfour declaration in 1917; the resultant violence, including that of British Mandatory rule; and for Britain's colonial legacy in the region generally and in the land of historical Palestine specifically.

