

# NON-VIOLENT RESISTANCE NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Published on behalf of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

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## PEACE AT LAST?

On October 3 Hamas agreed to the first two points of Trump's 20-point "peace plan" for Gaza, devised without input from Palestinians. These were that Israel should end the war in return for Hamas giving up all Israeli hostages, in return for with Israel freeing many Palestinians in Israeli jails; and that Hamas should surrender its weapons and stop governing Gaza. Amnesty would be granted to Hamas members of Hamas who agreed to give up their weapons and "live in peaceful coexistence".



*An end to this? Gaza 2025.*

Trump had earlier stated that if Hamas didn't agree to the plan as it stood within three or four days, "all hell, like no one has ever seen before, will break out against Hamas". In spite of this Trump, on the grounds of this this partial agreement by Hamas, ordered Israel to immediately stop bombing Gaza. Meanwhile Hamas negotiators met in Gaza to discuss how to react to the rest of Trump's peace deal. Israel has however ignored Trump's order to Israel to cease fire and the war has gone as before. What, if anything, will Trump do about this act of defiance by Netanyahu?

The rest of the peace plan involves governance of Gaza being passed from Hamas to a "temporary" colonialist-type administration named an "International Board of Peace" headed by Donald Trump himself as a sort of Gaza viceroy. The Board would consist of other

heads of state and other politicians including Tony Blair, but seemingly would not include any Palestinians. It would be tasked with organising the framework for funding the redevelopment of Gaza with a technocratic body carrying out the development and an international force providing security. It is left vague as to what is to follow government by the Board. The plan also does not require Israel to withdraw its troops from Gaza but only to a progressive series of "withdrawal line" all well inside Gaza, and Netanyahu has continued to state he will keep troops from Gaza and will never allow the setting-up of a Palestinian state.

One important thing the deal demands is the immediate end to Israel stopping or restricting aid into Gaza. Can we hope that this at least will be allowed by Israel?

# SUPPORTING PALESTINE ACTION

It is of course ridiculous for parliament to have agreed a statutory instrument making *Palestine Action* (PA) a terrorist organisation. Whom are PA supposed to have terrorised? PA has certainly caused serious damage to arms factories supplying weapons to Israel in the attempt to do something the government has so far refused to do – stop the UK supplying weapons to Israel to be used by it to commit genocide in Gaza.

Criminal damage is already a criminal offence whose penalties rise according to the value of the damage caused. Members and supporters of PA have bravely continued with their campaign in the face of some very heavy sentences for criminal damage and conspiracy to commit it. Thus in August 2024 four PA activists were given sentences of 12 to 14 months custody for conspiracy to commit criminal damage to an arms factory.

So why did the government want to go beyond this and adapt the Terrorism Action to make PA a terrorist organisation? Partly it was because some juries have sympathised with the actions of PA activists to the extent of ignoring judges' directions to convict, as juries have the right to do. (Meanwhile the government is also seeking to limit the rights of defendants to have their cases tried in the Crown Court in front of a jury, which is perhaps no coincidence.) Also I suspect an attempt to stem the growing support for campaign to get the government to stop supporting Israel in its war on Gaza by tainting this campaign in associating it with terrorist activity.



*Parliament Square, September 6*

The campaign to get the proscription of PA as a terrorist organisation lifted has been spearheaded by *Defend Our Juries* (DOJ). They have so far organised three successful well-organised demonstrations in Parliament Square which resulted in over 2000 arrests and also one at the Labour Party Conference at which 66 were arrested. There have also been arrests at smaller such demonstrations elsewhere.

The DOJ demonstrations involve demonstrators courting arrest for simply holding up a sign saying "I oppose genocide; I support Palestine Action", which is treated as showing support for a terrorist organisation. If found guilty of such support, the maximum sentence is six months, but with so many arrests and the lack of prison places it would be unlikely that any demonstrator would be given such a sentence. Being found guilty of inciting other people to support PA however could involve a sentence of up to 14 years.

I took part in the two such actions in Parliament Square, first as a supporter and then as one of the people holding up a cardboard placard with the above message on. Luckily for me I was one of the first arrested, at 1.19pm, so I was eventually released from Ilford Police Station (at about 9pm) in time to catch public transport home.

All very fine but I would like to make several criticisms of approach of DOJ's approach.

1) I see it as a mistake to make holding an NVDA actions dependent on a set number of people pledging to participate before going ahead with them.

Take for example the case of the Committee of 100 (C100) in 1961. The original aim of the organisation was to mount a campaign of civil disobedience powerful enough to force the government to adopt the



policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament. In its third major demonstration in London in 1961 it called for a mass assembly in Trafalgar Square. It was banned from using the Square but nevertheless went ahead with the demonstration, which became a *cause célèbre* for the right to demonstrate so thousands of people turned up, resulting in 1,321 arrests. (Two days later C100 organised a blockade of the US Polaris nuclear submarine base at Holy Loch, Scotland, resulting in 340 people, including myself, being arrested and charged with breach of the peace.)



*C100 blockade. Parliament Square 1961*

Flushed with this success the C100 decided on another mass civil disobedience action in London a few months later but made holding it dependent on at least 10,000 people pledging to take part. Unfortunately they failed to get this number and so felt obliged to call the demonstration off.

In reality this marked the end of C100 as a body able to threaten to make the UK ungovernable. The organisation did continue to campaign until 1968, organising quite large NVDA actions at nuclear bases and taking up other causes.

All this could have been avoided by just calling a demonstration and getting as many people as possible to take part.

2) Though DOJ briefings insisted that the demonstration should be quiet and non-violent nothing was done to try to ensure that it was. Instead there was incessant shouting of “Shame on You” at the police, 22 people were arrested on suspicion of attacking police and there were reports, at least in the media, of police being spat at and missiles being thrown. Two things are wrong here: a) non-violence principles involve not only being non-violent oneself but also refraining from inciting violence in others; b) such behaviour is counter-productive. It’s those being arrested who may suffer rougher treatment by police annoyed by such attacks

rather than those doing the shouting. And it gives the media the chance to show the demonstration in a bad light.

I think also the briefings by DOJ should have made clear that we should treat the police with the respect that we hope they will treat us, as they certainly did me. The police are not responsible for the law they are only there to enforce it. It would be nice if they decided to refuse to do so in this case, but they would lose their jobs, so it is a bit much to expect! And chanting “Shame on you” at them is not the best way to make them sympathetic to our cause.

3) I think the instruction to not talk to the police is wrong. Of course we should avoid saying anything to incriminate ourselves or others, but in my 64 years experience I don’t find police I’m arrested by trying to worm incriminating information out of me, they usually just want to chat to relieve the boredom involved in arresting and processing arrestees and to make for an easy relationship which is good for both them and us. A formal interview at the police station however is aimed at trying to get information out of us so the advice just to answer “no comment” to all questions or ask to read a prepared statement in such a setting is a sound one.

4) There seems a contradiction in the briefing as to the purpose of the demonstrations. Is it to get as many people arrested as possible or make it as difficult as possible for the police to arrest us? If the former then we should make it quick and easy for the police to deal with us so that they can make further arrests quicker and people are less likely to leave because of having to wait so long to be arrested, as happened. This would make it shorter and easier for those arrested too. In my case I did follow the DOJ briefing and lay down and went limp on arrest so I had to be carried by police, and also avoided being bailed at the roadside by not giving my name and address until taken to a police station to be processed and bailed. I now think I should have agreed to walk and be processed at the roadside

so the police involved in my arrest could have gone back to arresting others much quicker.

5) In my view DOJ should have complied with a police request to postpone a third “I Support *Palestine Action*” demonstration called for October 4<sup>th</sup> and by doing so show solidarity with the Jewish community over the terrorist attack on a Manchester synagogue, giving the lie to the claim that we are anti-semitic. In the end some 488 people were reported arrested for

supporting a proscribed organisation (plus four for other offences) which is less than a third of the over 1,500 people who had pledged to risk arrest at it. Whether this was because some changed their minds for similar reasons to mine, or the police decided to limit the number of arrests, or both, it could be claimed that the demo was a bit of a failure, another reason to avoid making holding a NVDA demonstration dependent on getting a certain number of people pledging to take part.

## THE GENOCIDE CONTINUES

In this edition I will just cover the main recent events in Gaza as the overall situation has largely continued unchanged with heavy bombing of all parts of Gaza, especially of medical facilities and schools, on the unverified claims that they were all sheltering members of Hamas, and also with the targetting of journalists.

The catalogue of infamy is as follows: as of 24 September 2025 over 68,300 people (66,414 Palestinians and 1,983 Israelis) had been reported killed by then in the “war” in Gaza according to the Gaza Health Ministry and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs respectively. The Palestinian dead are reported to include 217 journalists and media workers, 120 academics and over 224 humanitarian aid workers, including 179 *UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East* employees. It has been estimated that 80% of Palestinians killed are civilians. *Save the Children* estimate that by September 5 over 20,000 Palestinian children had been killed. Also the Israeli siege of Gaza has caused increasing numbers of people starving to death with *Al Jazeera* reporting on August 18 that by then 440 people in Gaza had died from starvation, including 147 children. According to the UN about 90% of the population across the Gaza Strip have been displaced during the war, some many times; and the Jewish newspaper *Haaretz* reporting on July 17, on the basis of satellite imagery of Gaza, that some 70% of buildings in Gaza had been completely destroyed. And on August 9 the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation reported, also on the basis of satellite imagery, that a staggering 89.5% of cropland in the Gaza Strip had been either damaged, made inaccessible, or both.

In August at an international meeting in Bogota, 12 countries agreed to stop the Gaza genocide by stopping military equipment being sent to Israel and stopping ships likely being used to bring such equipment to Israel from reaching Israel. The 12 however consist mostly of countries which would not be sending arms to Israel anyway and others which probably don’t have arms factories. The only exceptions were South Africa and Cuba plus Turkey who agreed to join the 12 later. Since then other countries have adopted a similar policy, including Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany and Italy. The US and UK are among countries that have not banned exporting weapons to Israel, though both have made small gestures, the UK has cancelled export licences for a small number of weapons that it describes as “offensive” but doesn’t include all weapons being used by Israel in Gaza; and the US only stopped sending Israel two of its most destructive non-nuclear weapons (Israel of course already has its own large arsenal of nuclear weapons), its 2000 and 500 pound bombs, though it soon restored sending the 500 pound bombs and in January 2025 Trump lifted the ban that Biden had put on the transfer of 2000-pound bombs.

### August

26: tens of thousands of people in Israel, in a “Day of Disruption”, call on Netanyahu to agree a deal to end the war and call off plans to attack Gaza City.

27: Pope calls on Israel to end “collective punishment” on the people of Gaza.

## September

9: Israeli jets firing missiles at the building in Qatar where Hamas's negotiating team were discussing a US peace proposal. Hamas reported that the assassination attempt failed to kill its chief negotiators but that five lower-level members were killed. On October 1 Trump belatedly signed an executive order guaranteeing Qatar's security, including by using retaliatory military action, if Qatar, a US ally, was attacked again.

12: The UN General Assembly votes 144-10 to back a Hamas-free government in Palestine governing the West Bank and Gaza. The decision can only be acted on by the UN if agreed by the Security Council where the US would doubtless use its veto to block it.

14: It was reported that about two-thirds of Israelis, including over half of Likud supporters just want the war to end, and large demonstrations against the war continue to be held in Israel. Meanwhile members of Netanyahu's coalition government are adamant they will withdraw from it if Netanyahu strikes a deal with Hamas, which could mean the fall of Netanyahu's government's.

16: Israel launches long-threatened fresh ground attack on Gaza City. The same day a UN commission of enquiry reported finding "clear evidence" Israel is carrying out genocide in Gaza. Meanwhile the UK government "has not concluded", in the words of David Lammy, that Israel is committing genocide. To admit it is would require the UK, under the *Genocide Convention* to which the UK is a signatory, to stop sending arms to Israel and indeed has an obligation to "prevent and punish acts of genocide".

17: The EU Executive calls for the suspension of EU countries' free trade with Israel. However the commission failed to gain the necessary majority in the General Assembly to pass this measure.

21: Starmer announces UK recognition of "Palestine" as a sovereign state, along with Canada and Australia, followed by Portugal and France. This means that by then the State of Palestine had been recognised as a sovereign

state by 157 of the 193 member states of the UN). The following day the Palestinian flag was raised at what had previously been named the *Palestinian Mission to the UK* during a ceremony to mark it becoming the Palestinian Embassy.

The next day a general strike was called in Italy in solidarity with the people of Gaza and demanding Italy recognised a Palestinian state, closing schools, disrupting trains and blocking ports and there were street protests involving thousands of people.

25: Microsoft blocks Israel's use of its technology for mass surveillance.

September 29: The Labour Conference defies the government by passing a union-led motion accepting the UN report that Israel is committing genocide in its war on Gaza and calling on the government "fully suspend the arms trade with Israel and the UK-Israel trade and partnership agreement". Meanwhile the government continues to claim that there is not sufficient evidence to prove genocide is taking place in Gaza. To accept even that there is a serious risk of genocide in Gaza would oblige the UK, as a signatory to the *Genocide Convention*, to take steps to protect the people of Gaza.

On October 1, Israel Katz, the Israeli defence minister, announced a "last opportunity for Gaza residents...to move south and leave Hamas operatives isolated in Gaza City." He added chillingly that those who remained "will be considered terrorists and terrorist supporters". Out of a previous population of around a million, nearly half had already left in response in previous Israeli orders to leave, but hundreds of thousands remained, unable or unwilling to leave.

October 2: the latest international aid convoy to Gaza 44 ships strong was, like the previous such convoy, intercepted and boarded by Israeli forces, which ordered the ships to sail to the Israel port of Ashdod where the passengers were taken into custody and sent to a security prison, where they were reported tortured before being deported. Those who refuse deportation were to be tried for "illegal entry".

*Apologies for dealing in the newsletter solely with what's happening in and about Gaza to the exclusion of other NVRN reports, but the situation in Gaza is so horrendous I decided I should concentrate on it and the current efforts to end the war.*



# COMING EVENTS

**October 8, 11am-1pm, Brough, Cheltenham, Havant, Rochester & Sheffield:** demos at sites supplying crucial components for F-35 fighter jets used by Israel to bomb Gaza. Org. by PSC, [info@palestinecampaign.org](mailto:info@palestinecampaign.org)

**10, Hastings, 8-10am:** "Two Years of Genocide in Gaza." Protest at General Dynamics arms firm in Castleham Road TN38 4NJ. Org. Hastings PSC, [email](mailto:email) or 07854 486794

**11, all day, online:** CND Annual General Meeting and Policy Conference: setting campaigning priorities for the year ahead. Contact: [conference@cnduk.org](mailto:conference@cnduk.org)

**11, London:** "National Demonstration for Palestine." Assemble noon on Victoria Embankment near Embankment tube for march to Whitehall for rally. Protest called by PSC, CND and others. Contact: 020-7700 6192. [media@palestinecampaign.org](mailto:media@palestinecampaign.org)

**12, Corsham, Wiltshire, noon-1.30pm:** protest at the main gate of MOD Corsham Space Warfare Centre, Westwells Road Corsham SN1 against UK's space warfare plan. Org. by CND and others. Info: [info@cnduk.org](mailto:info@cnduk.org)

**13, Reading, 7-8.30pm:** "Peace not War." Public meeting with speakers including CND General Sec Sophie Bolt. Part of *Lakenheath Alliance for Peace's* tour showing how we can work together to end the threat of nuclear weapons, militarisation, and endless wars. Free. At RISC Centre, 35-39 London Road, RG1. Contact: [lap@gn.apc.org](mailto:lap@gn.apc.org)

**14, London, 7pm:** "The Mistake." Play written by Michael Mears and performed by him and young Japanese actress about Hiroshima and events leading up to the bombing. At Arcola Theatre, 24 Ashwin St E8. For tickets contact: [boxoffice@arcolatheatre.com](mailto:boxoffice@arcolatheatre.com)

**21, London, 6pm:** "Hellfire: a journey from Hiroshima." Film screening and panel discussion about work of Japanese artists who created the *Hiroshima Panels*. Panel includes Sophie Bolt. At BLOC cinema, ArtsOne, Queen

Mary University of London E1. Info: [information@cnduk.org](mailto:information@cnduk.org) ; 020 7700 2393

**November 1, Glasgow:** "Stop the Nuclear Nightmare!" Scottish CND Annual Conference. At Adelaide Place Baptist Church 209 Bath Street, Glasgow, [campaigns@banthebomb.org](mailto:campaigns@banthebomb.org)

**1, London:** "An alternative vision of Security for France and UK." Conference on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lancaster House Treaty between UK and France for defence cooperation based on illusion of nuclear deterrence. With speakers from UK and France. At the Community Hall, St Anne's Church, 55 Dean Street W1 The Followed by a peace walk and vigil in the afternoon. Info: [info@cnduk.org](mailto:info@cnduk.org)

**Every Tuesday, 6-7-30pm, Menwith Hill:** peaceful witness at the main gate of the surveillance base. Org. *MH Accountability Campaign*. Contact [sswift64@gmail.com](mailto:sswift64@gmail.com)

**Every Wednesday, 6-7pm, London:** *Women in Black* silent vigil against militarism and war by Edith Cavell statue in St. Martin's Place, WC2. Wear black. [www.london.womeninblack.org](http://www.london.womeninblack.org)

**Every Friday, 1-2pm, Brighton:** *Women in Black* silent vigil at the War Memorial, Old Steine. Info: [brightonwib@11qp.co.uk](mailto:brightonwib@11qp.co.uk)

**Every Saturday, Oxford, 2-3pm:** *Women in Black* silent vigil for Peace and Justice at the Martyrs Memorial, bottom of St Giles, Oxford. Info: [oxfordwib@gmail.com](mailto:oxfordwib@gmail.com)

**Every Saturday, Diss, Norfolk, 10-11am:** Vigil for peace for Palestine in the Market Place.

**Every Sunday, Liverpool, 2pm:** assemble for march for Palestine at Metropolitan Cathedral Mount Pleasant for walk to Derby Square for rally. Info: [merseysidecnd@gmail.com](mailto:merseysidecnd@gmail.com)

**Last Saturday of every month, Lakenheath, noon-2pm:** *Lakenheath Alliance for Peace* vigil at main gate of Lakenheath US base to highlight opposition to US nuclear weapons returning to UK. [vigils@lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk](mailto:vigils@lakenheathallianceforpeace.org.uk)