

LIFT THE BAN! (“LTB”)

The Campaign to De-proscribe Palestine Action

Action Briefing Doc – Saturday 9 August – London

To be supplemented with short location specific briefings

Joining this campaign comes with risk, read this document carefully

This is a live document, please check back in for updates!

Last updated 24 July

“Action ... is never possible in isolation; to be isolated is to be deprived of the capacity to act.” (Hannah Arendt)



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[The objective of the campaign](#)

The objective of this campaign is to *Lift the Ban* on Palestine Action, i.e. for Palestine Action to be de-proscribed as a 'terrorist organisation'.

Yvette Cooper, the Home Secretary, introduced the ban after Palestine Action entered the RAF base at Brize Norton and spray painted two military planes red, shining a spotlight on the role of the British military in partnering Israel's genocide against the Palestinian people.

Following intensive lobbying by representatives of the Israeli government and the arms industry such as Lord Walney, dishonestly presented to the public as 'independent advisers', Palestine Action have been branded as 'terrorists', for trying to stop crimes against humanity and for exposing the British government's complicity in genocide.

It is vital that our campaign succeeds - not just for Palestine Action but for democracy. Once the meaning of 'terrorism' is separated from campaigns of violence against a civilian population, and extended to include those causing economic damage or embarrassment to the rich, the powerful, and the criminal, then the right to freedom of expression has no meaning and democracy is dead. If we let this go, the unions, and climate and racial justice movements will be next.

But the Government has overreached itself. Our groups and movements are coming together like never before, finding unity under repression. By refusing to give into fear and by standing together, we will face down this assault on us all.

The action

Conditional commitment

The actions on Saturdays 5th, 12 July, and 19th July, have changed the meaning of an arrest under the Terrorism Act. It has become a badge of honour to be arrested - a mark of resistance to genocide and of standing up for democratic freedoms.

In just two weeks since the Orwellian ban came into force, over 200 people have been arrested in the UK for holding cardboard signs saying, expressing personal opposition to genocide and support for those who resist it.

A further 80 people were arrested for holding a solidarity action outside the British Embassy in the Netherlands (there has also been a solidarity action in Denmark (<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DL092yQoUkF/?igsh=Y2Q4YThqNjluNGli>)).

Expressions of support for Palestine Action have gone viral online, with thousands, including high profile people such as George Monbiot, Roger Walters and Dale Vince, publicly expressing support (<https://x.com/dalevince/status/1941769353646485566>),

But it's the actions engaging the police that most expose the absurdity and totalitarian nature of the law. It's through these actions - mass, public defiance of the law, that we can bring about the lifting of the ban.

The next action will be on Saturday 9th August. It will be a conditional commitment action, which means it will only go ahead if at least 500 people have committed to taking action on the same day. 500 is more than double the total number of people arrested under the Terrorism Act in 2024. It would be practically and politically difficult for the state to respond to an action on this scale. Even assuming it had the physical capacity to arrest so many people on the same day, the political fallout from such an operation would be incalculable, causing irreparable damage to the reputation of the government and the police. Our assessment is that an action on this scale could be enough for the ban to be lifted.

Charging and prosecuting at least 500 more people, in addition to the 200 people already arrested, is likely to be beyond the capacity of the state, given the current situation in the criminal justice system.

The advantage of a conditional commitment action is that you sign up, knowing that you will only take action if hundreds of others are doing the same thing. There's safety in numbers and there's the promise of being part of a historic moment in facing down the repression of the genocidal state.

This time the action will only take place in central London. It is by bringing people together in one place that we can dramatise the moment most effectively, creating an impossible dilemma for the state.

[The action design](#)

The action will follow the principles for traditional *Defend Our Juries* sign-holding actions, in which sitters sit at locations of symbolic significance, relevant to the message we are communicating, with nonviolent composure, for 60 minutes or until arrested. We will hold signs which say:

**I OPPOSE
GENOCIDE**

**I SUPPORT
PALESTINE
ACTION**

Note: Please bring your own **blank placard** and the **thickest marker pen you can** to London. If you are bulk buying placards for friends see [here](#) for a link to buy 10 blank A2 placards. See [here](#) for a good example of a marker to buy (but don't stress about this too much, just bring the thickest you can find/afford).

Although there's a substantial risk of arrest, and all taking part should be prepared for that, the indications from the past three Saturdays are that the stakes for action-takers are relatively low. No-one has yet been charged with an offence, and no-one has been remanded. The Metropolitan Police has only arrested people for s.13 of the Terrorism

Act, which is a relatively low level, summary only offence (**IMPORTANT: Please read Likely Outcomes section on page 10 for possible implications from a charge, including travel and employment restrictions. It is essential you are aware of the worst case scenarios and are prepared for this).**

There seems to be a recognition that the law is in a state of flux, with de-proscription through the legal process, or a successful judicial review of the order, both real possibilities.

The actions **conform to nonviolent principles**. By making the actions as quiet and contemplative as possible, we better expose the absurdity of Yvette Cooper's order.

- We are sitting down (only standing in exceptional circumstances)
- We have a gaze lowered in contemplation and resolve, not seeking contact with passers by or the police. Our words, or lack of, on the sign are what we are communicating. Let them speak for themselves.
- We do not give media interviews during the action as they disrupt the peaceful and impactful atmosphere we are creating.

[Advance notice to police and press](#)

An important element of the action design is writing to the police in advance, to alert them to the action, and putting the press on notice, so they can arrange for reporters to be present. To date we have aimed to issue details of actions and locations a day in advance. The police have not taken pre-emptive action, and all actions have been able to proceed more or less as planned.

The actions are intended to create a dilemma for the police - whether to exercise common sense and allow peaceful demonstrations to proceed, while undermining the credibility of the Home Secretary's order; or to be seen to be spending public resources on suppressing freedom of expression and opposition to genocide. But the dilemma is only set if the police are aware the action is taking place.

Here are some examples of police letters that can be adapted:

Letter to Chief Constable, Avon and Somerset Police (Bristol), for 19 July

[Bristol police letter](#)

Letter to Met Commissioner, for 12 July

[Met Commissioner letter, 10 July](#)

Letter to Chief Constable, Greater Manchester Police, for 12 July

[GMP letter](#)

Independent actions outside London

For the 9th August, Defend Our Juries will only be directly supporting the action in London. The intention is for a mass action on a scale that makes it almost impossible for the police to intervene. A powerful expression of people's power to push back against authoritarianism. Small or solo actions won't have the same effect.

Given the scale of the action planned for London, we do not have capacity to provide support for actions outside London, for example with press releases or police station support.

But nobody owns resistance to oppression and injustice. If you do plan to organise an independent solidarity action outside London, for whatever reason, please ensure that those taking part are informed of the risks and properly supported through the action and beyond.

If you are taking action independently, please:

- 1) read this action briefing, so you're aware of the legal risks and prepared for arrest;
- 2) aim to make it a conditional commitment action, which only proceeds if you reach a critical mass of committed people (eg 50 to 100).
- 3) let us know about your action and if possible send us pcs / film via our Telegram content upload channel (https://t.me/+GgYiy_IQveU5MjA0) or via defendourjuriesmedia@gmail.com or @defendourjuries Instagram inbox, so we can amplify your action on our socials and in press releases; and
- 4) decide which lawyer or legal firm you'd want to represent you if you're arrested, and take their contact with you.
- 5) remember that when you plan an arrestable action, there's a responsibility to provide support to those taking part beyond the action itself, including for example with any criminal prosecutions.

Note from Solo Actions that took place on the 12th July. In Kendal, although the police were notified of the solo protest before, no arrest took place. The individual sat for an hour and went home afterwards. In Leeds, however, the police arrested the solo sitter for s.13 offence of the Terrorism Act 2000, held them for 6 hours in a police cell, and raided their house. More about raids and possible consequences on pages 6 and 7.

Timing

The timing of the action is still to be confirmed. But it is likely to begin again at 1pm, allowing for people to travel from different parts of the country. There may be a pre-meet at 12.30pm. By signing up to the form you'll get any necessary updates.

[Letter](#)

As with the first action, we will send a letter to the Home Secretary explaining our actions, clearly and openly [see [Home Sec letter, 5 July](#)].

[Legal briefing](#)

A. The legal basis for action

The right to freedom of expression (ECHR Art. 10)

The Human Right Act enshrines in law the fundamental democratic right to freedom of expression (European Convention on Human Rights, Article 10). If we can't speak out about a genocide in which the UK government is an active partner, and in support of those resisting genocide, the right has been stripped of all its meaning.

People may have different opinions about the tactics adopted by the Suffragettes, the women of Greenham Common and others who have damaged property as part of their protest methodology. But the idea that it could be a serious crime to express a supportive opinion of the Suffragettes (then or now) is obviously absurd. No different for Palestine Action.

The High Court judge who heard the emergency legal application against proscription indicated that there was a serious legal issue to be tried about whether the proscription was a proportionate interference with Article 10 and other basic rights, see [para. 71](#):

“At this early stage of proceedings, it seems to me likely that the proscription order interferes with the rights of the claimant and many other supporters under Article 10 and 11 ECHR. I doubt that Article 14 adds much in this regard. It also seems likely that the order serves a legitimate aim, namely protection of the rights of others and maintaining national security. The key question is likely to be whether the order is proportionate.”

In other words, there's a real possibility the order will be found to be unlawful, as violating fundamental rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Whatever the outcome in the British courts, we are confident that ultimately Yvette Cooper's mad order will be found to be unlawful, even if the journey takes us to the European Court of Human Rights. The UN and numerous legal and civil society bodies have already voiced their vigorous opposition to the order, opinions which will not easily be dismissed in Strasbourg.

Campaigning to lift the ban is lawful

Campaigning to change the law is not unlawful. If it were, the laws banning women from voting, making it a crime to be gay, and permitting slavery could never have been changed. Our campaign aims to reverse Yvette Cooper's crazy proscription, and that's a perfectly lawful thing to do. There is a statutory process under the Terrorism Act s.4 to apply for a proscribed organisation to be de-proscribed. Any person affected by the ban can apply. It is lawful to campaign for the de-proscription of a proscribed group, and that is what this campaign is all about.

The purpose of the campaign is to expose and bring to public attention the absurd and totalitarian nature of the law, ie that in the midst of the genocide, people holding signs opposing the genocide, and expressing support for those taking action to stop it, are arrested and detained.

So far the campaign is proving effective, with amongst others, *The Times* newspaper coming out publicly against the proscription.

Demonstrating the extent of public opposition to the ban of Palestine Action is an essential part of the campaign (the lawyers challenging the proscription want information on all those taking action to support the legal challenge).

B. Potential offences

Despite the essentially lawful nature of the campaign to lift the ban, it's vital that everyone taking part in the action understands the legal risks. The action has already prompted wildly varying responses from different police forces across the UK. In the most extreme case, in Cardiff, 13 people were arrested under s.12 of the Terrorism Act, their time in police custody extended beyond 24 hours, and their homes raided. Derry, Edinburgh and Kendal sign-holders have been left undisturbed.

So far no-one has actually been charged with an offence for a Lift The Ban sign-holding action (although someone was charged in Scotland for wearing a T-shirt along similar

lines). Most arrests have been for the lower level charge of TA s. 13. Significantly in London, the only arrests have been for s.13.

Terrorism Act s.12

The Terrorism Act 2000, section 12 states:

"Support.

(1) A person commits an offence if—

(a) he invites support for a proscribed organisation ...

(1A) A person commits an offence if the person— (a) expresses an opinion or belief that is supportive of a proscribed organisation, and (b) in doing so is reckless as to whether a person to whom the expression is directed will be encouraged to support a proscribed organisation".

S. 12 is an 'either way' offence, which can be tried either in the Magistrates Court or the Crown Court. In the Crown Court the maximum penalty is 14 years.

But s. 12 is about encouraging *others* to join Palestine Action (or being reckless about encouraging others), and that is not what the signs are doing. They are simple first person expressions. There is no information as part of the campaign or otherwise about how people might actually support the activities of Palestine Action, because that is not the purpose of the campaign. People are unlikely to be encouraged to join Palestine Action when they see people being arrested just for holding cardboard signs with their name on.

As Cardiff and Manchester have shown us, it's possible that people will be arrested for s.12, but we don't believe charges under this section would be appropriate.

Terrorism Act s. 13

TA s. 13 seems a more likely eventual charge for this action, even though there have been arrests for s.12 in Cardiff and Manchester. S. 13 is a relatively low-level charge, triable only in the Magistrates Court, and with a maximum penalty of 6 months imprisonment. It states:

Uniform [and publication of images]

(1) A person in a public place commits an offence if he—

(a) wears an item of clothing, or

(b) wears, carries or displays an article,

in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that he is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation.

It is arguable that holding our signs falls within the scope of this offence, even if the main purpose is to support the campaign for de-proscription. This offence does not require the prosecution to provide any evidence of your intent behind your actions, just the fact that a sign or article is shown that shows support for a proscribed organisation is enough to lead to a conviction.

The main defence to this charge is that the charge would be a disproportionate interference with the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, in the context of the lawful campaign to lift the ban on Palestine Action.

Likely outcomes

Expect to be arrested. To date all arrests in London have been for s.13, and there is no reason to expect that to change. Search warrants ('raids') can't be authorised for s. 13.

For anyone taking action outside London, be aware of the possibility of a more draconian response. In Cardiff and Manchester people have been arrested under s.12 and had their homes raided and tech seized. A solo sitter in Leeds also had their home raided.

If the campaign to lift the ban is successful, as it will be if enough of us take a stand, then it is unlikely any charges will be brought.

We need to be prepared for the possibility that the ban is not lifted, in which case there are more likely to be charges and prosecutions. Charges are more likely to be for s.13 rather than s.12, both because of the nature of the action, and also because of the resource implications for the state of so many crown court trials (which is only an option for s.12). If people are charged, prosecuted and convicted under s. 13, a fine, community order or conditional discharge is the most likely outcome, although a short prison sentence is a possibility. S.13 is a summary only offence, meaning it would be

dealt with in the magistrates' and thus would be a faster process compared to the Crown Court with lower costs. S.12, however, could go to the Crown Court, where a jury of your peers would decide whether you are guilty. Given the current backlog in the judicial system Crown Court trials may not be heard until a few years later.

Something else to consider is that any convictions under the terrorism act are excluded from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and therefore can never be considered 'spent' (i.e. can never be wiped off your record). This can have lifelong implications for things like employment and international travel.

Terrorism Act powers

The Terrorism Act confers additional powers on the police, e.g. to extend the time kept in police custody prior to charge. Nothing like this has happened in London, but in Cardiff the time people were held in police custody was extended as people's homes were searched. House searches can only be authorised as part of an investigation into a s.12 offence, but not for s.13.

Advice on Home Raids

Following the actions on the 12th July in Cardiff and Manchester, a number of people had their homes searched after they were arrested. This often happens in the early hours of the morning and can be a disorienting and frightening experience.

The police are likely to seize items such as phones, laptops and tablets, as well as notebooks and diaries. It can take a long time for these to be returned (if at all), so we do suggest removing anything you would not want to lose and storing elsewhere, prior to taking action.

If you're taking action outside London, we recommend warning anyone you live with that there is the possibility (but not always the likelihood, depending on your locality) of a raid on your home whilst you are in custody. Advise them to ask to see a warrant which should be signed and dated in the past, with the correct address. Ask under which power they are authorised. Identify police shoulder or warrant numbers. Ask for a copy of the search record before they leave. If they do not have a signed warrant, do not give them consent! If you are not in custody and they are coming to arrest you, they do not need consent.

In a house share, the police will not be able to search bedrooms occupied by others (although this has happened so be aware) but can search your communal areas. Ask

flatmates to keep their tech inside their own bedrooms. In a family, couple or single-person home, the police are likely to search all rooms.

You may want to consider some simple practical precautions if you're taking part in the actions eg a) remove tech (or hide v well in faraday case) and ideally have decoy phone/laptop/ipad to keep them happy b) warn housemates to do the same c) arrange for someone to be in or tell arresting officer to instruct colleagues to [eg use key hidden under stone] NOT break door down.

The police will usually knock on the door and give someone a few minutes to answer. If someone inside is more vulnerable, it might be worth sticking a note on the door before you leave stating this (eg "I am elderly and will take longer to answer the door"). If the door is not answered, it could be forcefully opened which can lead to significant damage you will be liable to repair.

If someone at home can film the search, and take note of items removed (write a list and ask for a receipt), that might be helpful later, but do not obstruct the police in their search. You may not get your stuff back!

Officers can force entry into a premises without a warrant where they have reasonable grounds to believe that someone who has committed a serious offence is inside, in order to arrest them and seize evidence.

Netpol has some thorough advice here and we recommend you read through before taking action: [What are your rights if the police raid your home? - Netpol](#)

Other implications

Could there be other implications for people, e.g. around employment or getting visas for overseas travel? The short answer is, "Yes, there could be." It's not possible to provide definitive legal advice on the full range of situations. There's an element of unpredictable legal risk in taking this action. If you need legal certainty, maybe the action is not for you. Ultimately the basis for taking this action is moral clarity rather than legal clarity.

The British government is acting in violation of the Genocide Convention, and it's time to step up.

[What you need with you](#)

Short answer, please bring as little as possible!