

# OXFAM SEEKS TO INTERVENE IN JUDICIAL REVIEW OF UK ARMS SALES TO ISRAEL

EMERGENCIES

Press Releases

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Oxfam has applied to intervene formally in a judicial review of the Government's continuing approval of arms sales to Israel, the international agency announced today. The case is being brought by the UK-based Global Legal Action Network (GLAN), and Al-Haq, an independent Palestinian human rights organisation. The case is supported by the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians.

The court has been presented with evidence that Israel is not complying with the legal obligations that apply during armed conflict. It is being asked to make an order requiring the Secretary of State for Business and Trade no longer to grant, and to suspend, all licenses of weapons and military equipment exports to Israel for use in Gaza.

As an organisation mounting a humanitarian response in Gaza, Oxfam has sought permission from the High Court to act as an intervener, in order to provide a witness statement outlining Oxfam's experience as a humanitarian responder in the enclave and to make representations on the applicable law. A hearing on its application will take place today at 10.30 at the Royal Courts of Justice.

The judicial review hearing is expected to take place in October. Since 2015, [the UK has licensed at least £489 million worth of military exports to Israel](#) and 61 unlimited value 'open' licenses including components for combat aircrafts, missiles, tanks, technology, small arms and ammunition. The UK provides approximately 15 percent of the components in the F-35 stealth bomber aircraft currently being used in Israel's military campaign against the population in Gaza.

Oxfam is calling for a ceasefire in Gaza to end the death and destruction and to allow vital aid to get to those who so desperately need it, as well as continuing to call for the release of the hostages.

Halima Begum, Oxfam GB Chief Executive, said: "Gaza is fast becoming completely uninhabitable. More than 37,000 people have been killed and a further 84,000 have been wounded, the majority children. At least 500,000 Palestinians in Gaza are facing famine and children are dying of starvation. As long as Israel is killing Palestinian civilians in apparent contravention of international law, the UK government has a responsibility to stop selling it arms.

"Morally, the UK should not be fueling this onslaught by selling Israel more weapons. Instead, it should be using all the diplomatic leverage it has to push for an immediate and lasting ceasefire. It is vital that the bombardment of Gaza ends, so that Oxfam and our fellow humanitarian agencies can safely deliver life-saving aid to civilians on the scale that is so urgently required.

"As Prime Minister, David Cameron proudly signed the Arms Trade Treaty on behalf of the UK – he is now Foreign Secretary of a government that would appear intent on rejecting its most fundamental obligations."

Previous Conservative and Labour governments have restricted or suspended the sale of arms during periods of violent escalation in Gaza including both the Thatcher and Blair administrations.

Alicia Kearns, Conservative chair of parliament's Foreign Affairs Select Committee, has said that government lawyers made clear to ministers that Israel has violated international humanitarian law in the ongoing war in Gaza.

Oxfam condemns the use of arms against civilians and violations of both international law and human rights law by all parties to the conflict, including Palestinian armed groups. In February, [Oxfam Novib won a lawsuit against the Dutch Government](#) for its export of arms to Israel that are being used in the war in Gaza.

Oxfam successfully intervened in a case brought by Campaign Against Arms Trade which challenged the UK government's granting of export licenses for arms sales to Saudi Arabia

for use in its war in Yemen. The Appeal Court determined that the UK was acting unlawfully by not determining, where possible, whether Saudi Arabian airstrikes may have been serious violations of international humanitarian law.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact: Sarah Dransfield in the Oxfam Press Office on 07884 114825 / [sdransfield@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:sdransfield@oxfam.org.uk)

**Notes to editors:**

Oxfam is represented pro bono by [Carolyn Ott](#) and [Tessa Gregory](#) of law firm [Leigh Day](#) who have instructed Marie Demetriou KC, and Ali Al-Karim of Brick Court Chambers, Professor Philippa Webb of Twenty Essex Chambers and Sean Aughey of Essex Court Chambers.

Al-Haq is represented by GLAN and Bindmans LLP.

**Al-Haq** is an independent Palestinian non-governmental human right [organisation](#) based in Ramallah, Palestine. The award-winning organisation was established in 1979 to protect and promote human rights and the rule of law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), and the rights of the Palestinian people more generally. The organisation has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Al-Haq documents violations of the individual and collective rights of Palestinians in the OPT, irrespective of the identity of the perpetrator, and seeks to end such breaches by way of advocacy before national and international mechanisms and by holding the violators accountable. [alhaq.org](http://alhaq.org)

**Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)** is a U.K.-based legal non-profit organisation with offices in the U.K. and Ireland. GLAN works with affected communities to pursue innovative legal actions across borders to challenge powerful actors involved in human rights violations and systemic injustice. Their advisory board includes Sir Geoffrey Bindman and Sir Alan Duncan [glanlaw.org](http://glanlaw.org) Contact: [acasey@glanlaw.org](mailto:acasey@glanlaw.org) +447890589188

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## **PRESS CONTACT**

For comments, interviews, or information please contact **Sarah Dransfield (Senior Press Officer)**:

Mobile: **+447884114825**

Email: [sdransfield@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:sdransfield@oxfam.org.uk)

Twitter: [@TheSarahPress](https://twitter.com/TheSarahPress)

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