

STOP BRITISH ARMS SALES TO ISRAEL

Warsi's shock resignation sends Tory establishment into turmoil

Protesters shut down arms factory in Lichfield supplying Israel with drones

Demand BDS – boycott, divestment, sanctions – to cut off Israel's support

The horror of Israel's assault on Gaza has not dimmed the spirit of solidarity with Palestine. Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets here in Britain, and millions have protested against Israel worldwide. People are appalled by Israel's war crimes and disgusted by the lies rolled out to justify the slaughter.

Yet so far the British government has stood firm in its support for Israel. British firms exported some £8 billion in arms and military equipment to Israel last year. The government says it won't stop licensing these sales and refuses to investigate whether British arms have been used to kill civilians.

Britain has always stood side by side with America in arming and backing the Zionist colonisation of Palestine. But there are signs that the political establishment is beginning to wobble over its unconditional support for Israeli state terror.

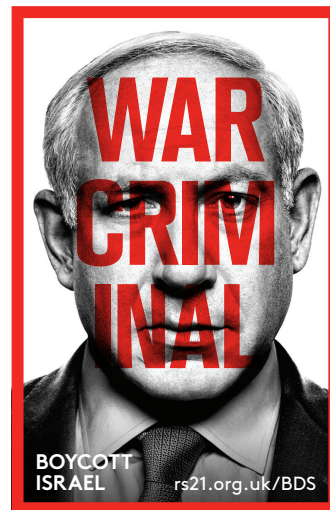
Last week minister Sayeeda Warsi resigned from the government, calling the government's stance over Gaza "morally indefensible". Nick Clegg, Cameron's usually spineless deputy prime minister, wants British arms exports to Israel suspended. Senior Tory and former cabinet minister Andrew Mitchell pitched in to make the same call.

Labour leader Ed Miliband has said he "cannot explain, justify or defend the horrifying deaths of hundreds of Palestinians". Even Boris Johnson has called the Israeli strategy "disproportionate" – a word government ministers refuse to use, since the International Criminal Court says killing civilians is a war crime if it is not "proportionate".

Politicians are fond of warm words if they think it will bring them votes. We need direct action to make the arms boycott a reality. Activists from London Palestine Action occupied the roof of a factory in Lichfield

owned by Israeli defence firm Elbit last week, shutting it down for over 24 hours before being carted away by police. The plant builds engines used by Israeli drones to terrorise the Palestinian population.

Last Saturday saw a national day of action to stop Sainsbury's selling items produced in Israel or the occupied territories. Activists occupied supermarkets, took Israeli produce off the shelves and called on shoppers to join the boycott. This is a tactic that works. Last month Tesco announced it will no longer stock dates grown in illegal Israeli settlements.



The call for Boycott Divestment Sanctions (BDS) against Israel was launched by Palestinians in 2005, inspired by similar tactics used against South Africa's former apartheid regime. Arms firms that supply Israel are a particular target – such as G4S, booked to do security at the Labour Party conference in Manchester next month.

BDS is direct action that we can all get involved with. Campaigning for a boycott helps win the argument that Israel is a racist state that should be isolated until it ends its terror tactics in Gaza and the West Bank.

Let's use BDS to build a movement that forces our politicians to drop support for Israel – a movement that delivers solidarity to all people across Palestine and the wider Arab world. Find out more at rs21.org.uk/BDS