

# *Protesters in London defy ban to rally in support of Palestine Action*

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London, July 5 (RHC)-- In a direct challenge to the British government's new ban, protesters have gathered in central London to show solidarity with the pro-Palestinian campaign group, Palestine Action.

The group, which uses direct action against Israeli weapons factories in the UK and their supply chain, was officially designated a "terrorist organization" after a late-night legal bid to delay the move failed on Friday. The proscription came into force on Saturday. Under the new legislation, membership of or public support for the group is now a criminal offense in the UK, punishable by up to 14 years in prison.

Protesters on Saturday gathered at Parliament Square, defying a warning from the Metropolitan Police, who said expressing support for the group "is a criminal offence."

The demonstration, organized by campaign group Defend Our Juries, however, saw protesters holding signs and chanting in support of the pro-Palestine group. Pictures from the rally showed protesters holding placards reading, "I oppose genocide, I support Palestine Action" in Westminster.

Police had warned that chanting slogans, wearing clothing, or displaying flags and signs in support of the group could lead to arrest under the Terrorism Act.

In a letter addressed to Home Secretary Yvette Cooper, protesters said that they "refuse to be cowed into silence by your order."

Palestine Action has focused much of its campaign on Elbit Systems UK, which it accuses of manufacturing and supplying weapons to the Israeli military amid the regime's genocidal war on Gaza.

In its most recent action, activists stormed Guardtech, a subcontractor the group says provides "essential clean room services" to Instro Precision—a subsidiary of Elbit Systems, Israel's largest arms producer.

Protesters blocked the company's only entrance on Wednesday and covered it in red paint, symbolizing the blood shed by the Israeli regime in the Gaza Strip.

Palestine Action says Instro Precision cannot operate without Guardtech's services, which are used to maintain the controlled environments necessary for producing radar kits and targeting systems.

Reacting to the ban on the group, a spokesperson for Palestine Action said, in a statement, "While London is rushing through Parliament absurd legislation to proscribe Palestine Action, the real terrorism is being committed in Gaza."

It said that the activist group "affirms that direct action is necessary in the face of Israel's ongoing crimes against humanity of genocide, apartheid and occupation, and to end British facilitation of those crimes."

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