

## **UK GOVERNMENT MUST BAN IMPORTS FROM ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS**

We call on Peter Kyle MP, the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, to urgently confirm the Government will ban imports of any item which is wholly or partially produced in Israel's illegal settlements.

Every day the Minister fails to stop imports of goods from illegal settlements the UK is breaching its international law obligations and exposing the British public to potential involvement in money laundering.

Illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, of Palestine, and the occupied Syrian Golan are a key feature of Israel's system of entrenched apartheid and settler-colonialism. The Israeli government is openly admitting that it plans to use settlement expansion to 'bury the idea of a Palestinian state'[1] thereby undermining and obstructing the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and return.

The production of goods for international export is crucial for the economic viability of the settlements, drives further settlement expansion, and normalises the illegal occupation. As one of Israel's most significant trading partners, the UK is one of the main destination countries for many settlement products, creating a direct link between British imports and the unlawful presence of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The UK Government must urgently ban imports because:

1. Revenue from settlements constitutes proceeds of internationally unlawful acts. Goods produced and revenue generated on stolen land is the benefit of the crimes underpinning the settlements. Every time a business knowingly imports a settlement good into the UK or sells and supplies it to consumers, it is committing a money laundering offence.
2. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) confirmed that States, including the UK must '... prevent trade or investment relations that assist in the maintenance of the illegal situation created by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory'.[2] The UN General Assembly's Resolution adopting the ICJ's Advisory Opinion called on all States to '...take steps towards ceasing the importation of any products originating in the Israeli settlements'. UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016) likewise affirmed that Israel's settlements constitute a flagrant violation of international law and called on all states to distinguish between Israel and the occupied territory in their dealings. This distinction encompasses trade and other economic relations.

We remind the Secretary of State that all High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions, including the UK, have an obligation to respect and ensure respect for the Conventions. This includes ensuring that public authorities and private entities do not become involved in the acts of appropriation, destruction, pillage and forcible transfer underpinning the settlement enterprise.

Finally, the UK has a duty to condemn and prevent acts of racial segregation and apartheid, under Article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The

settlement enterprise [3] constitutes acts of institutionalised racial discrimination, and segregation against the Palestinian people, entrenching the apartheid regime.

The UK Government must implement measures to prevent, monitor, and prohibit illegal settlement goods imports in accordance with its obligations under international law. Failure to act continues to expose the UK to legal complicity in the maintenance of illegal Israeli settlements and presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

*[1] Bezalel Smotrich quoted in BBC, 'Israeli settlement plans will 'bury' idea of Palestinian state, minister says', 14 August 2025, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ckgdzxpkkdd7o>.*

*[2] ICJ Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, Advisory Opinion, Judgment ('OPT Advisory Opinion') dated 19 July 2024, § 278.*

*[3] OPT Advisory Opinion, § 229.*

### **Signatories:**

1. Al-Haq
2. Amnesty International UK
3. Artists' Union England
4. Bakers, Food & Allied Workers Union
5. BARAC UK
6. British Palestinian Committee
7. Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT)
8. Corporate Justice Coalition
9. European Legal Support Centre (ELSC)
10. Fire Brigades Union
11. General Federation of Trade Unions
12. Global Justice Now
13. Global Legal Action Network (GLAN)
14. International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP)
15. Law for Palestine
16. Na'amod
17. Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC)
18. Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)
19. Trade Justice Movement
20. Trocaire
21. War on Want

**\* The letter has been sent but is still open for signatures, and updates on future work - please reach out to [communication@law4palestine.org](mailto:communication@law4palestine.org)**