

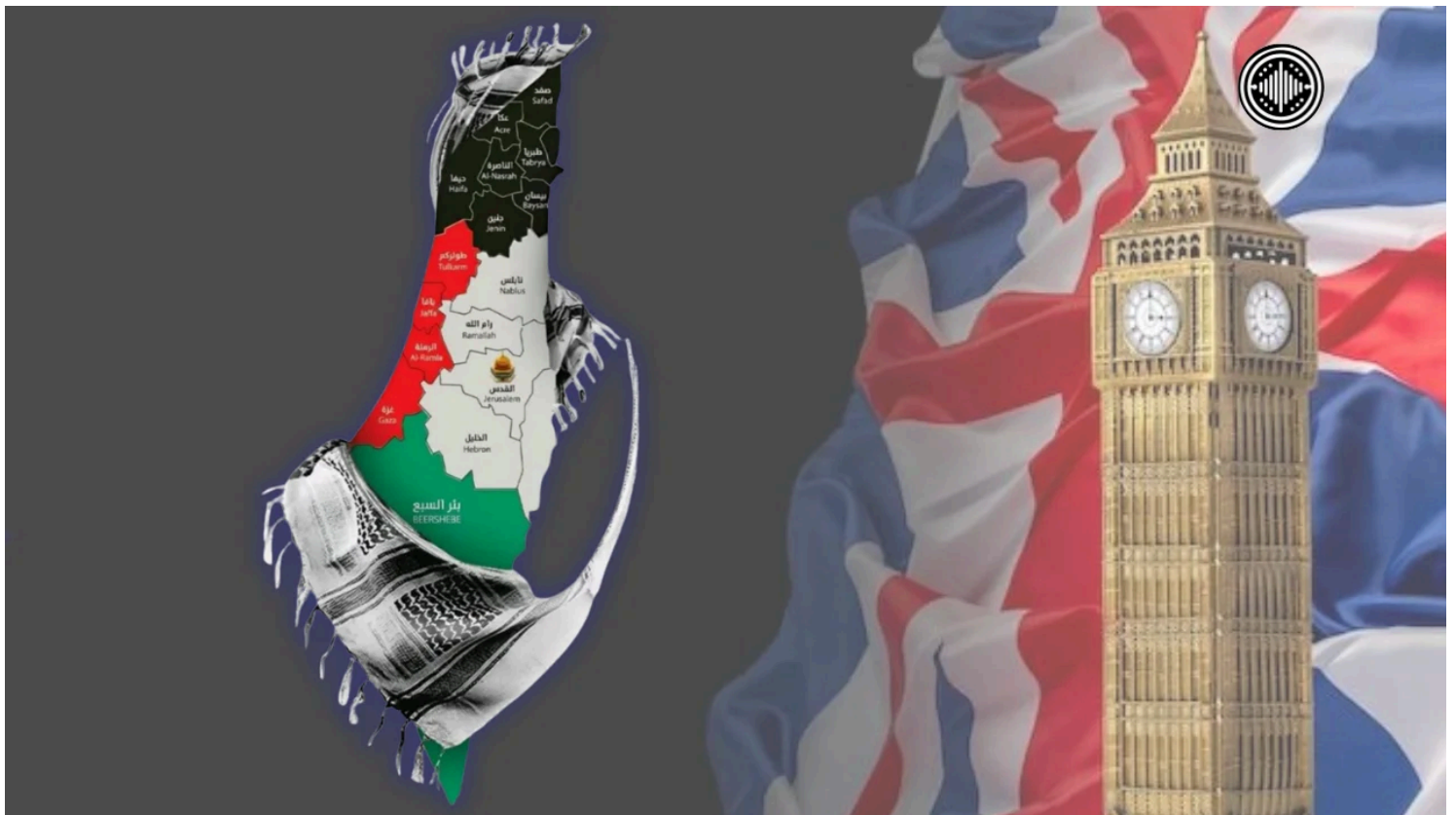
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SNP Urges UK to Recognise Palestinian State Now

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The Scottish National Party has urged the United Kingdom government to formally recognise the state of Palestine and immediately halt arms exports to Israel, accusing ministers of prolonging the conflict in Gaza by failing to act decisively.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) intensified its criticism of Westminster this week, claiming the government's reluctance to recognise Palestinian statehood is contributing to continued violence in the region. Brendan O'Hara, a Member of Parliament (MP) and the SNP's Middle East spokesperson, argued that if ministers "could muster just a shred of conviction and

courage,” they would use their influence to press for an immediate ceasefire. He contended that recognising Palestine is not only a moral imperative but an essential condition for any credible two-state solution.

O’Hara’s remarks came after French President Emmanuel Macron stated during his state visit that acknowledging Palestinian statehood was “the only path to peace.” France, along with Ireland, Spain, and Norway, has signalled plans to recognise Palestine formally. According to the SNP, 144 members of the United Nations (UN) have already taken this step, isolating the United Kingdom and raising questions about its commitment to resolving the conflict.

The SNP also called for a full suspension of arms sales to Israel, describing continued weapons exports as evidence of British complicity in what it labelled a “slaughter” of civilians in Gaza. The party argued that unless the government stops deflecting responsibility, it will remain accountable for enabling the escalation.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy responded by emphasising that the United Kingdom remains “completely committed” to eventual recognition of a Palestinian state but declined to provide a timeline, describing the situation as “moving” and “live.” A spokesperson for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) defended the government’s record, pointing to measures including suspending certain export licenses, restarting funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and imposing sanctions on Israeli officials. The spokesperson insisted these actions demonstrate “decisive” efforts to reduce suffering and secure a lasting peace agreement.

While the SNP’s demands have struck a chord among some voters, there are broader concerns about the practicality and timing of unilateral recognition. Critics note that rushed diplomatic gestures can undermine long-term security interests and potentially embolden extremist factions. Others question whether the current Labour leadership, already under pressure for its handling of migration and domestic priorities, is willing or able to take on the political costs associated with such a shift in foreign policy.

As the conflict continues, the debate over how the United Kingdom should engage remains sharply divided. For now, the government appears determined to maintain a cautious approach, balancing humanitarian concerns with the realities of an unstable Middle East. Whether that balance is sustainable in the face of mounting pressure from both domestic critics and European allies remains to be seen.

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