

Mass Arrests of Peaceful Pro-Palestine Protesters Spark Outrage in UK

LONDON (Dispatches) -- The co-founder of Palestine Action has hit out at British ministers for making false and defamatory allegations about the banned group, and contradicting their own intelligence assessments in an attempt to justify recent mass arrests.

The British government has come under pressure to justify the detention of 532 people arrested over the weekend under the Terrorism Act – half of whom were 60 or older – on suspicion of showing support for Palestine Action.

The number of people arrested for peaceful protests, together with the images of older people being led away and the demands placed on the criminal justice system, have led many to call into question the criminalization of so many people.

On Monday, a Downing Street spokesperson responded by saying Palestine Action, which last month became the first direct action protest group to be banned, was “a violent organization that has committed violence, significant injury, extensive criminal damage”.

The home secretary, Yvette Cooper, told the BBC that Palestine Action “is not a non-violent organization” and claimed that court restrictions meant people “don’t know the full nature of this organization”.

But Huda Ammori, co-founder of Palestine Action, said: “Yvette Cooper and No 10’s claim that



Police officers detain a protester during a rally against the British government’s proscription of “Palestine Action” under anti-terrorism laws, in Parliament Square, in London, Aug. 9, 2025.

Palestine Action is a violent organization is false and defamatory and even disproven by the government’s own intelligence assessment of Palestine Action’s activities.”

“It was revealed in court during my ongoing legal challenge to the ban that the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre’s (JTAC’S) assessment acknowledges that ‘Palestine Action does not advocate for violence against persons’ and that the ‘majority’ of its activities ‘would not be classified as terrorism’.

“Spraying red paint on war planes is not terrorism. Disrupting Israel’s largest weapons manufacturer, Elbit Systems, by trespassing on their sites in Britain is not

terrorism. It is the Israeli Defense Forces and all those who arm and enable their war crimes who are the terrorists.”

JTAC, a government body based within MI5, produced a secret report on March 7 which was disclosed in the high court.

While recommending banning Palestine Action, JTAC said the group “primarily uses direct action tactics”, which typically resulted in minor damage to property. “Common tactics include graffiti, petty vandalism, occupation and lock-ons,” it added.

Defend Our Juries, which has organized multiple demonstrations, including Saturday’s, in support of Palestine Action, also highlighted

Whitehall officials’ description – again in documents revealed in court – of a ban as “relatively novel” as “there was no known precedent of an organization being proscribed on the basis that it was concerned in terrorism mainly due to its use or threat of action involving serious damage to property”.

A Defend Our Juries spokesperson said: “It is despicable that under political pressure, Yvette Cooper is now actively misleading the British public about the nature of Palestine Action, knowing that if people come to their defense to counter her disinformation, she can have them jailed for 14 years [because they could be deemed to supporting a proscribed group].”

The group said many hundreds of people had already committed to the next protest, which is likely to take place in early September and to be on an even larger scale.

Uncertainty remains over the status of charges and prosecutions. Tom Franklin, chief executive of the Magistrates’ Association, said: “Based on the information that we currently have, and the statement put out by the Metropolitan Police yesterday [Sunday], it could take days and possibly weeks for decisions to be made on whether or not to charge any of those arrested over the weekend. Many of these cases may also be heard in the crown courts, rather than magistrates courts.”

Tensions Rise as HTS Militant Killed in Clash With Kurdish Militants

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- A member of Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the group currently governing most of Syrian territory including the capital Damascus, was killed on Tuesday in armed clashes with U.S.-sponsored Kurdish militants from the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in northern Aleppo province, according to a statement from the HTS ministry of defense, reported by SANA.

The HTS-led regime, under the leadership of Abu Muhammad al-Jolani—a former commander in both al-Qaeda and Daesh—has established itself as the de facto authority across vast regions of Syria following

the collapse of the previous central government during the foreign-imposed conflict. Only the northeastern territories remain under the control of separatist Kurdish militias backed by the U.S. military occupation.

In March, the SDF claimed to have reached an agreement to join institutions governed by HTS, in a move described as part of efforts to end Syria’s long-standing division. However, the details of the agreement remain vague, particularly regarding how the SDF’s foreign-backed militias would be incorporated into the HTS military structure.

The HTS ministry of defense emphasized in its Tuesday state-

ment that any integration must occur on an individual basis under the centralized authority in Damascus, rejecting the SDF’s demand to be integrated as a bloc—an approach seen as an attempt to preserve their autonomy and foreign ties.

“The SDF must adhere to the terms of the national agreement and immediately cease its armed provocations against state forces,” the ministry warned. “If these violations continue, they will result in serious consequences.”

Tensions between the two sides escalated further over the weekend, when an official within the HTS regime announced

that Damascus would not take part in upcoming meetings with SDF representatives planned in Paris—talks widely seen as orchestrated by Western governments seeking to prolong Syria’s fragmentation.

Despite attempts at national reconciliation, the continued occupation of oil-rich northeastern Syria by American forces and their Kurdish proxies remains a major obstacle to restoring full sovereignty.

Syria’s population includes a rich mosaic of religious and ethnic communities—Sunni Muslims, Alawites, Christians, Druze, Shia Muslims, and a sizable Kurdish minority.

Saudi Shipping Giant Denies Claims of Arms Shipments for Israel

RIYADH (Dispatches) -- The National Shipping Company of Saudi Arabia (Bahri) has categorically denied reports claiming it was involved in transporting weapons to Israel.

In an official statement issued on its website, Bahri said, “These allegations are entirely false and with-

out merit.”

The company stressed its full commitment to Saudi Arabia’s established policy on the Palestinian cause, as well as to all local and international laws and regulations governing maritime transport.

Bahri clarified that it “has never transported any goods or ship-

ments to Israel and has never been involved in any such operations in any capacity.” It added that all its operations are “subject to rigorous oversight and clear review procedures to ensure full compliance with applicable regulations.”

The company also stated it was ready to take legal action against

any claims that could harm its reputation or misrepresent its policies.

The denial came in response to Italian media reports that workers at the port of Genoa had blocked a Saudi vessel named Bahri Yanbu, allegedly carrying weapons from the United States bound for Israel — a claim Bahri firmly rejected.

Multiple Wildfires Burn Across Turkey; Hundreds Evacuated

CANAKKALE, Turkey (Reuters) -- Firefighters battled multiple wildfires across Turkey on Tuesday, with a large blaze in the northwestern province of Canakkale burning for a second day after hundreds of residents were evacuated in precaution.

Both Canakkale airport and the Dardanelles Strait, which connects the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara, were temporarily shut due to the wildfires on Monday.

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Wildfires in Canakkale’s Ezine and Ayvacik districts were largely brought under control, but blazes in the city centre in the southern part of the Dardanelles Strait were still burning, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Ibrahim Yumakli said in a post on X.

Seven planes and six helicopters were tackling the blaze on Tuesday, Canakkale Governor Omer Toraman said in a post on X, adding that there was no immediate danger to residential areas.

Other wildfires in the northern province of Edirne and southern province of Hatay were completely brought under control while efforts were underway to battle another wildfire in the western province of Manisa, Yumakli said.

Iran... (Continued From Page One)

upcoming talks between Larijani and Lebanese officials will be mutually beneficial, strengthening the security and stability of both nations.

Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, Emani noted, “Mr. Larijani’s visit to Lebanon comes at a critical juncture in the country’s history.” He added that during his candid meetings, Larijani will clearly articulate Iran’s perspectives on regional issues and bilateral cooperation.

The visit underscores Tehran’s ongoing role in supporting Lebanon amid the region’s complex dynamics. Iran’s commitment to fostering stability and backing resistance movements against external plots has become increasingly prominent, according to observers.

As Larijani’s delegation arrived in Beirut, a notable social media campaign gained momentum across Lebanon, particularly among journalists and Shia communities. The hashtag #Iran_Is_Not_A_Patron, quickly trending on multiple platforms, conveyed a powerful message: Iran is a steadfast ally, not a controlling force.

This grassroots digital movement emerged as a direct response to Western and Israeli media narratives that portray Hezbollah’s ties to Iran as evidence of Tehran’s dominance over Lebanon.

The hashtag’s rapid spread reflected widespread popular support for strategic relations with the Islamic Republic and a rejection of hostile allegations aimed at the resistance axis.

Lebanese social media users sent a clear signal to regional adversaries that despite increased pressure from the United States and Israel against Hezbollah, the bond between Iran and the resistance remains unbreakable.

Larijani’s meetings with high-ranking Lebanese officials will focus on recent developments in the country, security cooperation, and broader regional stability.

This diplomatic mission comes amid heightened tensions and complex political challenges in Lebanon, where internal divisions and external pressures have made stability precarious. Iran’s active engagement seeks to reinforce a strategic partnership that it views as vital to countering destabilizing forces in the Middle East.

As Ambassador Emani remarked, “The results of Mr. Larijani’s discussions in Beirut will serve the interests of both countries and enhance their security.”

Police... (Continued From Page One)

Iran, assassinating senior military and intelligence officials, nuclear scientists, and striking key military sites and administrative infrastructure.

Analysts speculate that the purpose of striking administrative buildings and infrastructure is to weaken the Iranian government’s grip and control over its border provinces with the hope of seeding unrest and separatist movements.

Both during and after the war, Iranian security forces seized large caches of explosives, drones, and weapons, along with workshops used for manufacturing unmanned systems from within the country itself.

Since then, the hunt for infiltrating agents has continued across the country, with leaders urging citizens to “maintain their vigilance, as they showed during the war.”

HTS... (Continued From Page One)

represents a critical strategic shift. Russia, which was a major backer of the former Assad government and played a decisive role in Syria’s fight against terrorist groups, had previously conducted joint patrols along

the Syrian border. These patrols served as a deterrent to Israeli military actions. Since Assad’s fall, Russian patrols diminished, creating a security vacuum exploited by Israeli forces.

HTS now views Russia’s return as essential to re-establishing stability and deterring further Israeli incursions. Moscow’s involvement is seen as a stabilizing force capable of offsetting HTS’s military limitations. The Russian military maintains bases across Syria and has kept channels open with the new regime, balancing its regional interests while managing delicate relations with Israel.

This renewed Russian presence is likely to reshape security dynamics in southern Syria. HTS’s inability to confront Israeli aggression independently highlights the significance of Moscow’s role as a security guarantor. The Syrian leadership’s appeal to Russia underscores the reliance of the new authorities on external powers to preserve sovereignty and maintain order.

Tehran views this development with strategic interest, considering it a vital step toward countering Israeli aggressions and restoring regional stability. The restoration of Russian patrols along the border aligns with Iran’s broader regional goals of supporting allied forces and ensuring a strong front against Israel.

HTS’s failure to respond effectively to Israeli military pressure has made the return of Russian forces a crucial factor in Syria’s southern security.

Moscow’s involvement may reduce Israeli incursions and provide HTS with the necessary backing to stabilize its governance, while HTS continues to consolidate power amidst ongoing regional challenges.

New... (Continued From Page 2)

Major General Amir Hatami called for the expansion of military cooperation with South Africa, which he praised for gallant stances in condemnation of the Israeli and U.S. strikes against Iran.

Highlighting the capacities for closer cooperation between the two countries in the military fields, the Iranian commander expressed hope that the potentials would turn into practical programs and promote mutual interaction.

General Hatami also admired South Africa for condemning the recent Israeli and U.S. war of aggression against Iran and for lodging a complaint against the Zionist regime in the International Court of Justice for genocidal crimes in Gaza.

For his part, General Maphwanya said South Africa and Iran have common goals and have always stood by the oppressed and defenseless people.

Hailing the history of mutual respect between South Africa and Iran, the general expressed his country’s interest in the promotion of defense relations with Iran.

He also condemned the Israeli regime’s criminal policies in Gaza and the West Bank.

Armenia... (Continued From Page 2)

He assured Araghchi that Yerevan would consider regional peace, stability, and mutual Iran-Armenia interests when making decisions about transit routes.

Under a deal signed between Azerbaijan and Armenia in Washington on Friday, Armenia granted exclusive rights to the U.S. to develop a corridor in its southern Syunik province, which borders Iran, to connect Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan.

Iran has for long opposed the idea, saying it would change the geopolitical order of the Southern Caucasus and would restrict Iran’s ability to use transport networks in the region.