

Israel's "Blood Diamonds": When a Diamond is Forever . . . on Your Conscience

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

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The last thing anyone wants when they buy a diamond to wear with pride and confidence as a symbol of love and commitment is for it to be tarnished by association with bloodshed and violence.

It's no wonder then that the jewellery industry [remains silent](#) about the ongoing trade in diamonds that are a major source of funding (\$1bn/yr) for the Israeli military which stands accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In evidence to the London Session of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine Israeli political economist, Shir Hever, stated:

Every time somebody buys a diamond that was exported from Israel some of that money ends up in the Israeli military. So the financial connection is quite clear.

With the pressure cooker of occupation and subjugation crushing Palestinian society the brutality of the Zionist project in occupied Palestine is being laid bare once again. Israel's record of gross human rights violations has been documented over decades but never before has it seemed so up close, so personal and so primeval.

In the past few days and weeks gruesomely breathtaking pictures and videos of the inhumanity that is part and parcel of the expansionist Zionist project have flashed from our screens at a rate that both numbs and enrages in equal measure.

Some of the scenes are similar to what one might expect to see in a snuff film. Unarmed Palestinian children have been shot and killed even though they posed no danger to heavily armed soldiers and police. In one particularly [harrowing scene](#), as a 13 year old child, Ahmed Saleh Mahayan (Manasra), lay seriously injured in a pool of blood after being deliberately run over by a police vehicle and denied medical assistance for minutes on end, he was kicked by a police officer and goaded and cursed by Israeli settlers who recorded the scene with their phones.

No one sought to reassure, comfort or assist him as he struggled for live.

At least one other cold-blooded execution was also [recorded on video](#).

In another incident a 30 year old Palestinian woman with her hands raised in the air

was [gunned down](#) in cold blood. Israeli authorities claimed afterwards that she tried to stab a soldier but they failed to produce a weapon of any sort. Witnesses denied she was armed or threatened the soldiers. [A video](#) of the scene shortly after she was shot showed a soldier kicking away a pair of sunglasses which she had in her hand.

In besieged Gaza seven unarmed Palestinian youths were shot and killed and scores more were wounded by snipers firing from the fortified safety of border posts inside Israel. Over [thirty Palestinians](#) and seven Israeli's have been killed since this latest [escalation of violence](#) erupted at the end of August when occupation forces denied Muslims access to the Al Aqsa mosque and allowed right wing Jewish extremists enter the compound in occupied East Jerusalem.

The infrastructure for Israel's full spectrum subjugation doesn't come cheap. Soldiers, tanks, planes, nuclear weapons, ships, armoured vehicles, bombs and bullets all come at a price. In addition to the \$3 billion received in US military aid it cost the Israeli economy about \$17 billion each year. Any other economy of similar size would be crushed by such a burden. But the Israeli economy has a golden goose that keeps laying – a diamond industry that accounts for 30% of manufacturing exports which add \$10 billion net to the economy each year.

Despite the fact that diamonds from Israel account for about 30% of the market in value terms, jewellers still claim diamonds are “ethically sourced” and “conflict free”. This is the equivalent of supermarket claiming that chicken fed on a diet laced with antibiotics and hormones is organic if the egg it hatched from came from an organic farm. Just because a rough diamond is conflict-free it doesn't follow that the cut and polished stone isn't a blood diamond.

If any other industry foisted such a deliberate and deceitful fraud on consumers it would be sanctioned by regulatory authorities and sued in the courts by disgruntled customers – something that might still happen as more and more people learn about the deception at the heart of the diamond industry.

Publicly listed companies such as Anglo American, which owns De Beers and the Forevermark brand, Signet, Harry Winston, Sotheby's and others involved in the diamond industry are covering up the trade in cut & polished blood diamonds which evade of the Kimberley Process regulations that only apply to rough diamonds.

As long as blood diamonds that fund rogue regimes guilty of the sort of human rights violations being witnessed daily in Palestine are allowed to contaminate the legitimate market, masquerading as conflict-free diamonds, all diamonds should be considered blood diamonds.

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