

Unwavering Support Makes UK Government Complicit in Israeli War Crimes in Gaza: British Muslim Expert

Lack of transparency regarding number of British citizens fighting for Israeli army is concerning, says Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi

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A retired British-Palestinian professor, who lost 25 members of his family in an Israeli airstrike, said the UK's unwavering support for Israel "implicates" it in "massacre" in the Gaza Strip.

In a letter to British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi, expert on international relations, expressed his "profound distress and anger" regarding the recent "war crimes" in the Gaza Strip and the role of the UK in "these crimes."

Referring to the Israeli attack in al-Maghazi refugee camp on the Christmas day, El-Awaisi said an Israeli airstrike claimed the lives of 25 members of his family, most of whom were children and women.

"It is my belief that the UK's unwavering support for Israel implicates it in this massacre. The British government, akin to the American administration, seems to be facilitating ethnic cleansing and genocide in Gaza Strip," he said.

"In my opinion, as a retired British professor of international relations, this makes the UK government complicit in Israeli war crimes in the Gaza Strip, with the blood of Gaza equally on the hands of the UK government as it is on Israel's," said the letter which

was sent to Sunak on Dec. 31.

Defining “ongoing war crimes” in the besieged enclave “alarming,” El-Awaisi mentioned the indiscriminate attacks on civilians and infrastructures that have claimed lives of thousands of people.

The death toll from the Israeli assault on Gaza since the Oct. 7 cross-border attack by Hamas has crossed 22,000, more than half of them women and children.

Most of the enclave’s population of more than 2.2 million remains under siege and bombardment, are displaced, and short of food.

Involvement, Reactions of British Citizens in Israeli Crimes ‘Disturbing’

El-Awaisi said that along with indiscriminate attacks, the involvement and reactions of British citizens in these crimes is “equally disturbing.”

“For instance, the incitement of war crimes by Aryeh Yitzhak King, a British citizen and deputy mayor of Jerusalem. Eylon Levy from North London, now a spokesperson for the Israeli government. Peter Lerner, originally from Kenton, North London, who has become a prominent figure in the Israeli army as a lieutenant colonel and spokesman. Richard Hecht, the Scottish Colonel and a voice in the Israeli Army.”

He said these individuals not only represent the UK in a foreign conflict but also raise “serious questions” about the UK’s policies regarding its citizens participating in such activities.

Citing reports regarding the participation of British citizens in Israeli reservists, El-Awaisi said the lack of transparency regarding the number of British citizens fighting for the Israeli army is concerning, “especially in contrast to the UK’s explicit prohibition of Britons fighting in Ukraine.”

Their involvement, he said, raises critical questions about the UK’s stance on its citizens participating in foreign wars, adding that the question that “haunts many is why the UK government remains silent on the number of British citizens fighting for the Israeli army.”

He asked

“why is there a lack of transparency regarding British citizens fighting for the Israeli army and is it a criminal offence under British law for citizens to travel to Israel or the occupied Palestinian territories to fight for the Israeli army or any other state or non-state actor?”

El-Awaisi also asked Sunak how does he justify the “apparent double standards” in the government’s stance on British citizens fighting in Ukraine and those in Israel.

“The situation in Gaza and the involvement of British citizens in the Israeli army’s actions not only challenge the international rules-based order but also threaten the integrity of the rule of law within Britain itself,” he said in the letter.

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