



## PRESS RELEASE

### **UN experts call upon UK authorities to protect hunger strikers and stop the criminalization of solidarity with Palestine**

Geneva, London, 28 December 2025. **In December 2025, CETIM and The Landworkers' Alliance have urgently invoked UN human rights protection mechanisms to denounce the extremely alarming situation of the ongoing hunger strike by prisoners on remand for alleged actions in protest of the genocide in Gaza, and to demand that the British authorities take immediate measures to guarantee their fundamental rights. This action also seeks to challenge the growing criminalization of movements in solidarity with Palestine. Following the referral, UN experts intervened urging the UK to protect the lives and rights of the detainees on hunger strike.**

See the UN experts' press release: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/12/un-experts-urge-uk-protect-lives-and-rights-pro-palestinian-detainees-hunger>

A further 33 people have been held on remand for more than a year for alleged involvement in direct action to protest the UK's involvement in the genocide. They have been systematically denied bail on the basis of accusations of "support for terrorism." The vast majority of the alleged acts, however, predate the ban—under British anti-terrorism legislation (July 2025)—of the *Palestine Action* movement. It should be noted that the banning of this movement constitutes a blatant violation of international standards on freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly, as enshrined in international human rights law.

The hunger strikers have revealed punitive and degrading detention conditions, including restrictions on communication with their families and lawyers. In addition, they have been subjected to grossly inadequate medical care. In at least one case, a detainee was reportedly left without medical assistance for several hours despite repeated calls for help. The prisoners have reported being repeatedly targeted for physical and verbal abuse and punishment on the basis of their political beliefs. The fact that their mistreatment became markedly more acute after the proscription of Palestine Action amounts to retrospective punishment. For a fuller account see this supporting document from Prisoners for Palestine.

This situation is part of a broader context of systemic repression of mobilizations in support of Palestine in the UK. As early as January 2025, four UN Special Rapporteurs alerted the British government to the abusive use of anti-terrorism measures against pro-Palestinian activists and to the

worsening of their detention conditions. In July 2025, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights described the banning of Palestine Action as a “worrying” and unprecedented use of anti-terrorism legislation. On 25 December 2025, the UN experts reaffirmed that “these hunger strikes must be understood within the broader context of restrictions on pro-Palestinian activism in the UK”.

62 British parliamentarians signed a motion regarding the hunger strike and expressing concern over the prisoners' treatment. There have been widespread expressions of concern and solidarity from numerous humanitarian organisations, domestically and internationally. The UK government continues to refuse to act. The Minister of Justice has declined all requests for meetings, even as the lives of the detainees are in danger.

By bringing the matter before relevant UN mechanisms, CETIM and the Landworkers' Alliance want to first of all protect the rights of the hunger strikers, who are being persecuted for expressing their solidarity with Palestine. Our organisations welcome the timely intervention of UN mechanisms, which have recalled the United Kingdom to its international obligations, particularly with regard to the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, the right to a fair trial, and the freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly.

We now call for immediate bail for all political prisoners, accountability, and reparations for the harm caused by the UK authorities.

CETIM and the Landworkers' Alliance reaffirm their support for social movements mobilized and engaged in international solidarity, and in particular for those who, at the cost of their freedom and risk to their lives, defend national liberation struggles, the right of peoples to self-determination, social justice, and respect for international law.

### **Solidarity is not a crime.**

#### **Note:**

- The Landworkers' Alliance is a UK-based, democratic union for small-scale farmers, growers, foresters, and land-based workers, focused on creating a better food and land-use system through agroecology, food sovereignty, and social justice. As members of La Via Campesina, a peasant global movement, we oppose all forms of colonialism, and the oppression of our fellow landworkers around the world. The genocide in Palestine has decimated the Palestinian food and farming system and created a manufactured famine. In the occupied West Bank state-sponsored settler violence and the Israeli occupation threatens the very existence of Palestinian farms and food systems. Landworkers' Alliance member, Amu Gib, is one of eight prisoners awaiting trial for alleged direct action in protest against UK's complicity with the genocide, who began a hunger strike in November 2025. In recent days, four of the hunger strikers have paused following medical emergencies leading to hospitalisation, the remaining prisoners are continuing to refuse food.

- CETIM is a Geneva-based organization, research center on people's struggles for social transformation. Enjoying UN consultative status, it supports social movements and grassroots communities and organizations in gaining access to the UN human rights protection mechanisms.

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