

RIGHT TO PROTEST

**For the attention of:
Sir Mark Rowley, Commissioner
Metropolitan Police Service
New Scotland Yard
Victoria Embankment
London
SW1A 2JL**

Date: 27th August 2025

Dear Sir Mark Rowley,

URGENT

Re: Police conduct at Parliament Square protest and request for assurances regarding 6 September 2025 demonstration

We are writing to raise serious concerns about the Metropolitan Police's conduct in relation to the arrests made under section 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000 at the Defend our Juries organised protest at Parliament Square on 9 August. We set our concerns as follows:

1. Misapplication of Section 13 Terrorism Act 2000

Section 13 of the Act states:

(1)A person in a public place commits an offence if he—

(a)wears an item of clothing, or

(b)wears, carries or displays an article,

in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that he is a member or supporter of a proscribed organisation.

Section 13 requires *reasonable suspicion* that a person is either:

- a *member* of a proscribed organisation, or
- a *supporter* of such an organisation.

The majority of those arrested on 9 August were retirees, many were in their 60s, 70s, and in their 80s¹, and in some cases unable to walk unaided. It is plainly unrealistic to suggest that such individuals could be *members* of a direct-action group such as Palestine Action, which requires physical agility and mobility.

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/aug/10/police-arrest-hundreds-london-protest-over-palestine-action-ban>

The signage carried at the protest was not displayed “in such a way or in such circumstances” as to constitute “support” within the meaning of section 13. The police were on actual notice of this fact, by reason of the protestors’ publicly available statements of intention, published on their website several weeks in advance of 9 August. Any contrary assertion would amount to a deliberate misrepresentation of the factual record and an unlawful interference with the evidential basis of the protest. The protestors’ stated intention is publicly available on the Defend our Juries’ website, where it is made clear that²:

“It is vital that our campaign succeeds – not just for Palestine Action but for democracy. Once the meaning of ‘terrorism’ is separated from campaigns of violence against a civilian population, and extended to include those causing economic damage or embarrassment to the rich, the powerful and the criminal, then the right to freedom of expression has no meaning and democracy is dead. If we let this go, the unions, and climate and racial justice movements will be next.

But the Government has overreached itself. Our groups and movements are coming together like never before, finding unity under repression. By refusing to give into fear and by standing together, we will face down this assault on us all.

The objective of this campaign is to Lift the Ban on Palestine Action, i.e. for Palestine Action to be de-proscribed as a ‘terrorist organisation.’”

The protestors have made clear on their website that their protest was a political demonstration against the proscription of Palestine Action and in defence of the right to protest, freedom of expression, protection of democracy and against executive overreach that could see similar non-violent, direct action groups be proscribed - and not an attempt to encourage support for Palestine Action itself. Had that been the case, the relevant provision would have been section 12. The fact that the police did not proceed to charge under section 12 is clear acknowledgement by the Metropolitan police that the protestors’ intent is understood not to be “support.”

The Metropolitan police are reminded that “Supporting Palestine Action’s right to protest is not the same as supporting Palestine Action.”³ The protestors’ stated aim was to support Palestine Action’s right to protest, and thus calling for the group to be de-proscribed.

2. Evidence Tampering

It is further a matter of grave concern that prior to the 9 August protest, the Defend Our Juries website – which clearly and publicly stated the protestors’ intentions - was taken down⁴.

The Metropolitan Police subsequently interfered with Defend Our Juries’ briefing calls in advance of the planned 6 September action, securing the removal of their Zoom briefing on two occasions at the

² <https://defendourjuries.net/lift-the-ban/>

³ <https://goodlawproject.org/clive-stafford-smith-in-support-of-palestine-actions-right-to-protest/>

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/defendourjuries/posts/breaking-defend-our-juries-website-taken-down-as-attack-on-freedom-of-speech-wor/122246385896148266/>

Metropolitan Police's⁵ request. Such conduct constitutes, at minimum, interference with and potential tampering of exculpatory evidence, namely the protestors' public statements of intent.

3. Policing by Consent

British policing is founded on the principle of policing by consent, as confirmed by the Government⁶. The power of the police flows from law and public consent, not from executive instruction. The unlawful arrests of peaceful political protestors seemingly at the behest of Government, undermines this principle and breaches Article 10 ECHR (freedom of expression).

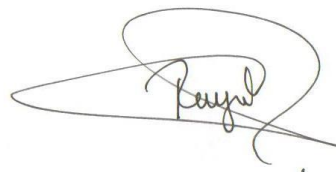
Request for Assurances

In light of the above, we request urgent written confirmation that:

1. Metropolitan Police will not carry out unlawful arrests under sections 12 and 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000 at the Defend our Juries protest on 6 September 2025;
2. Police officers will not interfere with the protestors' lawful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and assembly under Articles 10 and 11 ECHR;
3. The Metropolitan Police will refrain from further interference with protestors' communications or published statements of intent, which are relevant evidence of lawful purpose.

We look forward to your urgent response confirming that the protest on 6 September will be permitted to proceed without unlawful arrest, intimidation, or interference by the Police.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Ranjeet Brar MD FRCS FRAE

Right to Protest

⁵ <https://x.com/DefendourJuries/status/1958594098224337312/photo/1>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/policing-by-consent/definition-of-policing-by-consent>