

UK says not wise to ban arms sales to Israel as full-scale invasion of Rafah looms



London, May 13 (RHC)-- British Foreign Secretary David Cameron has voiced opposition to suspending arms sales to Israel, saying it is "not a wise path" for the UK government even as the regime is planning a large-scale assault on the southern city of Rafah in the Gaza Strip.

Cameron made the remarks in an interview with BBC on Sunday after U.S. President Joe Biden threatened to freeze American arms supplies to Israel if the occupying regime went ahead with a full-scale ground invasion of Rafah.

The top British diplomat went on to say that halting arms exports to Israel would only strengthen the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas and make a prisoner swap deal less likely. Cameron also stressed that the UK government could not support Israel's attack on Rafah "unless they have a plan" to protect civilians. "We have not seen that plan so we do not support a major operation in Rafah," he said.

Cameron also noted that Britain supplies a very small amount of Israel's weapons and it cannot be compared to the U.S., after the UK's opposition Labour Party and human rights groups argued that London should follow a similar position.

London is facing domestic pressure since an Israeli attack on the World Central Kitchen convoy killed three British nationals last month in Gaza. Government officials have repeatedly emphasized in recent months that UK defense exports to Israel were very small.

Nonetheless, over 100 MPs have urged UK government to ban arms sales to Israel.

Anti-arms campaigners have said that the true figure could be much higher because the items sold under opaque open licenses keep the value of arms and their quantities secret. They also point to how critical UK-made components may be to Israel's war effort.

Israel has vowed for weeks to launch a ground incursion against Rafah.

The Israeli military has already gone ahead with waging limited ground attacks against the city and seized the nearby crossing into Egypt, which is the main corridor for the transfer of aid into besieged Gaza.

Some 1.5 million Palestinians are seeking refuge in Rafah after fleeing a war that the regime has been waging against the Gaza Strip since October 7.

More than 35,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have been killed so far during the war, which began following the al-Aqsa Storm, a retaliatory operation by the territory's resistance groups.

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