

Journalist critical of Israeli genocide in Gaza arrested in UK under Terrorism Act

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Independent British journalist Richard Medhurst (File photo)

London, August 21 (RHC)-- An independent British journalist critical of Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip has been briefly arrested in the UK under Section 12 of the country's Terrorism Act of 2000.

In a video posted on his X account, Richard Medhurst said that he was arrested at London's Heathrow Airport and held in custody for almost 24 hours. The journalist denounced his arrest as "pre-planned" and "coordinated," noting that many people have been detained in Britain because of their journalism.

"I felt that the whole process was designed to humiliate, intimidate and dehumanize me and treat me like a criminal," he added. "There is clearly no need to hold me there this entire time, but I believe this was done on purpose to rattle me psychologically... I categorically and utterly reject all the accusations by the police. I'm not a terrorist. I have no criminal record."

Medhurst also said that he is providing a counterweight to mainstream media, complaining, however, that he is being "politically persecuted" in his country. "I got the feeling, nevertheless, that those like me, who are speaking up and reporting on the situation in Palestine, are being targeted," he asserted.

"Palestine, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza remains the most pressing news story in the world. However, it seems that any statement ... can be ... twisted into an offence of the highest order."

The journalist further censured the British government for suppressing freedom of expression. "Freedom of the press and freedom of speech are really under attack. The state is cracking down and escalating to try and stop people from speaking out against our government's complicity in genocide," he said.

Medhurst, who used to host a show for Iran's English-language news channel Press TV, has been very vocal in his criticism of the Israeli regime as well as London's complicity in the genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

Former UN weapons inspector and prominent geopolitical analyst Scott Ritter, whose house was raided by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) earlier this month, called Medhurst's arrest a "political persecution" meant to "hamper [his] important work as a journalist."

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