

Report says Israel tried to influence UK courts against pro-Palestine activists

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London, August 24 (RHC)-- Israeli embassy officials in London have reportedly attempted to exert influence on legal proceedings involving pro-Palestine protesters. Citing documents, disclosed in a Freedom of Information request by the UK-based protest network Palestine Action, The Guardian reported that the officials from the mission of the Tel Aviv regime had pressed for Douglas Wilson, the director general of the UK attorney general's office, to interfere into cases against the demonstrators.

An e-mail sent last May by Wilson to embassy representatives after a meeting says the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the principal public agency for conducting criminal prosecutions in England and Wales, operates “independently.”

“[CPS] makes its prosecution decisions and manages its casework independently. The law officers are unable to intervene on an individual case or comment on issues related to active proceedings,” the e-mail reads.

The meeting’s minutes similarly refer to Wilson “noting the operational independence of the CPS and the sensitivities of engaging with them on individual cases.” The e-mail came after several protests by the activist group Palestine Action targeting the sites and offices of Israeli weapons manufacturer Elbit System in the UK.

Following the revelation, the London-based International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP) called on the British government to “strongly condemn foreign interference in internal affairs and lack of respect for the independence of the British judicial system.”

“The Israeli embassy has a historic pattern of attempting to undermine British democracy,” it said in a statement. “This tactic forms part of a larger strategy to intimidate and silence critics of Israel in the United Kingdom.”

Palestine Action said the disclosure is a “confirmation” of the long-suspected Israeli attempt to “exert top-level diplomatic influence to lock up those who stand against its war machine.” The released correspondence, it added, sheds light on the plethora of charges leveled at “hundreds” of pro-Palestine campaigners, including conspiracy to blackmail and criminal damage.

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