



Ireland fans protest 'unconscionable' Israel fixture during Qatar match

## Description

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Ireland football protest Israel fixture

Irish football supporters in Dublin interrupted the national team's match against Qatar by [throwing Palestine-themed tennis balls on the pitch](#). The fans were protesting at the Football Association of Ireland's (FAI) disgraceful refusal to call off the team's [October Nations League fixture](#) against the abomination that is so-called 'Israel'.

Supporters threw the balls on two occasions during the first half, resulting in the referee pausing the match. The protesters had decorated the balls with the Palestine flag and wrote: 'Stop the game'. [In an Instagram post](#) League of Ireland Fans for Palestine explained the intention was to:

'send a strong message to the Football Association of Ireland and the Irish government that the Nations League fixtures between Ireland and Israel MUST be cancelled.

Supporters of all the main LOI [League of Ireland] clubs in the capital were joined by fans of Cork City, Drogheda United, Dundaalk FC, Galway United, Sligo Rovers and Waterford for the action!

## 'Playing football with war criminals'

They quote a participant in the action, who said:

It is unconscionable that these games would go ahead as the apartheid Occupation regime continues to perpetrate genocide against the Palestinian people. We'd be literally playing football with likely war criminals.

Military service is mandatory over there, so most of their Nations League squad will have served in the "Israel Defence Forces". They have slaughtered more than 1,000 athletes and coaches, including at least 421 football players, in Gaza since October 2023, while also destroying or damaging 265 sports facilities.

There are signs indicating support for cancelling the match is now entering even establishment spaces. On RTÉ, Ireland's national broadcaster, post-match pundit Richie Sadlier felt comfortable [saying the following](#)

Being here tonight, it's kind of really hit home what it is they're protesting and what it is we're potentially facing. In four months, as things stand, it'll be nearly three years into a genocidal campaign. The Israeli flag is going to hang on that pole over there. The Israeli anthem is going to be played on the speaker. Israeli fans potentially waving flags will be in those seats just there.

He continued:

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After everything the president's family has been through recently, maybe the president will be the one who'd be forced to shake hands with the representatives of that nation just over there.

It's baffling to me how two and a half years into what's going on in the world at the moment, it is controversial or contentious or objectionable that someone suggests, do you know what, maybe let's not just play football against them. Maybe instead of playing a match against them, maybe let's not play that match.

## Taoiseach Martin backs "Israel," again

Sadlier's reference to "the president's family" is about Margaret Connolly, president Catherine Connolly's sister. [Margaret was one of the Global Sumud Flotilla activists abused](#) by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) after they abducted her in international waters.

Social Democrats TD Sinéad Gibney [raised the prospect of RTÉ not showing the match](#) in the same way they [refused to televise Eurovision](#) while the genocidal Zionist entity took part. She asked minister for sport Patrick O'Donovan whether he had:

"committed to supporting RTÉ to get out of its broadcasting contract to broadcast the Israeli fixtures?"

According to RTÉ's own reporting, O'Donovan:

"said the broadcaster had made "no approach" to his department.

Of course, things shouldn't get anywhere near that point, and the match must be stopped long before October. That's of no interest to [genocide-backing Taoiseach Micheál Martin](#), who [RTÉ? also quote](#) As usual, Martin protected 'Israel' and said the focus on the match:

'It does not do justice to the enormity or complexity of the issue.

In reality, the [apartheid land theft project's](#) participation in such competitions as the Nations League is crucial to normalising the least normal entity on earth. Furthermore, it is about much more than a football match. Rather, it is about ensuring the genocidal pseudo-state is ostracised from all international forums. This mirrors what happened to apartheid South Africa.

The national team's footballers have cautiously signalled their own feelings about the match going ahead. [Veteran Seamus Coleman appeared to hint](#) that the FAI needs to take the only sensible action and call the match off. He said:

It should have been **default watermark** above us. That's FAI, UEFA and whatever it is. I am a Dad, I am a husband, I am a father. I know the difference between right and wrong.

## Sadlier: Time for action, not words

The excellent Sadlier emphasised Coleman's point that the decision needs to be taken out of players' hands:

I think it would be an act of respect to the players, to the management, to the dignitaries, to the supporters, to the media, that they're not all put through the situation where they have to either show up or do what every footballer would not want to do, which is to choose not to show up. I keep hearing the word 'this would be a strong statement'. This isn't a statement.

We're great in this country at statements. The most powerful politicians in this country give statements. They're ineffective and useless. This would be an act. This would be a decision to act. And I would fully be behind people who think, you know what? This long into this set of circumstances, action of some kind is surely required.

*Featured image via James Manning / Getty Images*

By [Robert Freeman](#)

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1. during
2. fans
3. fixture
4. ireland
5. israel
6. match
7. news
8. protest
9. qatar
10. unconscionable

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