



Premier League clubs â??complicit in Israeli apartheidâ?? says report

Description

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Premier League trophy ready for presentation to Arsenal

The International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP) and War on Want have issued letters to 15 Premier League clubs. Theyâ??re raising concerns about the clubsâ?? complicity in [Israeli](#) atrocities via their ties to companies linked to Israelâ??s genocide in Gaza and apartheid across the [Occupied](#)

[Palestinian Territories](#)

These findings come from [War on Wantâ??s](#) latest report: [Red Card: English Premier League Sportswashing of Israelâ??s Atrocities against the Palestinians](#). [ICJP](#) has also supported the report.

The report details the connections of at least 15 Premier League club sponsors to Israelâ??s devastating military assault and blockade on Gaza, construction of illegal settlements, and wider system of apartheid.

The companies identified include:

- AXA.
- BP.
- Canon.
- Carlsberg.
- Cisco.
- Coca-Cola.
- Eurobank.
- Evelyn Partners.
- Expedia/Hotels.com.
- Hewlett Packard Enterprise.
- HSBC.
- Standard Chartered.

- Oracle.
- Sony.

The report names nine clubs with complicit sponsors:

- Arsenal.
- Chelsea.
- Crystal Palace.
- Everton.
- Fulham.
- Liverpool.
- Manchester City.
- Manchester United.
- Tottenham Hotspur.
- Two others, Brighton and Burnley, have sponsors at risk of complicity.

Premier League is complicit

Alarming, every single one of the 20 Premier League clubs has indirect sponsorship from Barclays Bank. Barclays is the main sponsor of the Premier League. Barclays has decades-long links to systematic racial discrimination. That includes apartheid South Africa and Israel's apartheid against Palestinians. The sponsorship deal with Barclays makes a mockery of the Premier League's campaign to "kick racism out of football".

War on Want and ICJP wrote to the clubs in March, as well as to the English Football Association (FA) and the English Premier League (EPL) itself, to inform them of the report's main findings and the risk of complicity in the atrocities themselves faced by clubs if they do not cease the business relationships as soon as possible.

Israel's attacks on Palestinian football

Red Card reveals how Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid has hit Palestine's football ecosystem hard. Since October 2023:

- Israel has destroyed or damaged 265 sports facilities.
- Israel has killed at least 565 members of the Palestinian Football Association, including the "Palestinian Pelé" Sulaiman al-Obaid.
- Domestic football leagues in Gaza and the West Bank have collapsed.
- Israel has turned stadiums into detention sites.
- Israel has blocked the import of astroturf for Palestinian teams to play on.

Israel's attacks on Palestinian football are a microcosm of its wider genocide. Since 2023, at least 72,000 Palestinians have been killed and 172,000 injured in Gaza. 92% of homes in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged. And 93% of schools have been destroyed or severely damaged.

War on Want's report is calling for:

- The Premier League to introduce an immediate ban on sponsorship from companies linked to genocide, apartheid and illegal occupation.
- Clubs to review and terminate sponsorship agreements identified in the report.
- The UK Government to uphold international law and ensure that UK-based companies are not contributing to illegal occupation, apartheid and genocide.

Á?rlaith Roe, ICJPâ??s public affairs and communications officer, said:

Premier League football prides itself on standing against racism and discrimination, but as with so many other areas, Palestinians are the exception, with Israel uniquely being granted impunity for its human rights abuses against Palestinian people. The failure to act is a glaring double standard, standing in sharp contrast to the response taken against other states, including Russia.

The rhetoric of equality and inclusion rings hollow while Palestinian footballers and fans face oppression, and Israel and the Israel Football Association are allowed to continue competing as though nothing had happened. Footballâ??s governing bodies can no longer avoid meaningful action â?? the case showing Israel a red card is now overwhelming.

Neil Sammonds, War on Wantâ??s senior campaigner, said:

These clubs speak proudly about equality, inclusion and community. Yet behind the branding, some are helping sanitise corporations connected to some of the gravest crimes and humanitarian catastrophes of our time.

Palestinian footballers are being killed. Stadiums are turned into detention camps. Child players are buried beneath rubble. The Premier League has shown before that it can act when sponsorship becomes morally toxic. The question is why Palestinian lives appear to count for less.

Featured image via Alex Pantling / Getty Images

By [The Canary](#)

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