# Metropolitan Police prepare for two rival Middle East protests in central London this Saturday



Protests related to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East are set to take place in central London this Saturday, with two high-profile demonstrations planned simultaneously in the heart of the capital. The Metropolitan Police have confirmed the arrangements and conditions set for these events, reflecting the heightened tensions surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The first demonstration is organised under the Palestine Coalition banner, a coalition that includes groups such as the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and Stop The War. Protesters will gather at Russell Square from midday before marching through Aldwych and the Strand to Whitehall, concluding with an assembly outside Downing Street. Notable figures scheduled to address the crowd include former Scottish First Minister Humza Yousaf, former Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, and musician Paloma Faith, underscoring the event's high profile and political significance.

Simultaneously, a counter-protest organised by the pro-Israeli group Stop The Hate will take place near Waterloo Bridge at the junction with the Strand, starting at 12.30pm. This group has appealed for solidarity with Israeli families facing attacks and with people in Iran resisting their government, positioning their demonstration as a stand against the wider regional instability.

The Metropolitan Police have imposed specific conditions under the Public Order Act to manage the protests effectively. For the Palestine Coalition march, participants are required to remain within designated areas in Russell Square before following a specified route to Whitehall, where the assembly must conclude by 5.30pm. The police are also in talks about conditions for the Stop The Hate protest to ensure public safety and order.

This year's demonstrations follow a pattern of sustained protests around the Israel-Palestine issue in London, with earlier events drawing significant crowds and sometimes leading to confrontations. For instance, a previous Palestine Solidarity Campaign protest resulted in the arrest of 77 people for breaching Public Order Act conditions, reflecting the contentious and sometimes disruptive nature of these gatherings.

The backdrop to these protests includes recent government actions, notably the Home Secretary's decision to ban the group Palestine Action. This move came after footage emerged of activists vandalising RAF aircraft at RAF Brize Norton, an act that the government deemed criminal. The ban criminalises membership or support for the group, which has sparked varied reactions; the Palestine Solidarity Campaign condemned the decision as "outrageous," while others welcomed it as a necessary response to unlawful acts.

The Palestine Coalition has framed their mobilisation around calls for the UK government to move beyond condemnation towards more decisive action against what they describe as "unconscionable" Israeli actions in Gaza and the West Bank. They warn of escalating conflict risks, including potential wider regional war involving Iran.

Meanwhile, the Stop The Hate group seeks to highlight the plight of Israeli civilians and oppose anti-Israel sentiments, emphasising solidarity with those under threat from missile attacks and political oppression.

These protests illustrate the deep divisions and passionate commitments on both sides within the UK public over Middle East issues. London has become a focal point for these demonstrations, with authorities caught between protecting the right to protest and maintaining public order amidst growing tensions.

The upcoming demonstrations will test the Metropolitan Police’s capacity to manage competing large-scale protests in close proximity, balancing freedoms with safety concerns. As the situation evolves, the political and social reverberations of such public expressions of conflict abroad continue to impact the UK domestic landscape.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[4]](https://news.met.police.uk/news/met-ready-for-busy-weekend-of-protests-and-other-events-495139)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/gaza-london-parliament-whitehall-downing-street-b1163080.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[4]](https://news.met.police.uk/news/met-ready-for-busy-weekend-of-protests-and-other-events-495139), [[5]](https://palestinecampaign.org/palestine-coalition-statement-march-route-announced/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[3]](https://news.met.police.uk/news/more-than-70-arrested-at-palestine-solidarity-campaign-protest-492799)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[5]](https://palestinecampaign.org/palestine-coalition-statement-march-route-announced/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/)
* Paragraph 8 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/)
* Paragraph 9 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/), [[2]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/two-middle-east-related-protests-to-be-held-in-central-london-on-saturday-OXUFHH2K4NITTO2MG2ML2GBXSA/> - The article reports on two significant protests scheduled in central London on Saturday, organised by the Palestine Coalition and the pro-Israeli group Stop The Hate. The Palestine Coalition's protest will commence at Russell Square at 12pm, proceeding to Whitehall and culminating in an assembly outside Downing Street, featuring speeches from figures like Humza Yousaf, Jeremy Corbyn, and Paloma Faith. The Stop The Hate counter-protest is set to take place simultaneously near Waterloo Bridge. The Metropolitan Police have imposed conditions under the Public Order Act, requiring participants to remain within designated areas and adhere to specified routes, with the assembly concluding by 5.30pm. The article also mentions the Palestine Coalition's composition, including the Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Stop The War, and references recent developments such as the Home Secretary's decision to ban Palestine Action following an incident at RAF Brize Norton.
3. <https://news.met.police.uk/news/more-than-70-arrested-at-palestine-solidarity-campaign-protest-492799> - This Metropolitan Police news release details the arrest of 77 individuals during a Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) protest in London. The protest aimed to breach Public Order Act conditions, leading to significant disruption. The PSC had been in discussions with the police for several weeks prior to the protest. Conditions were imposed to prevent protesters from assembling near a synagogue close to Portland Place, requiring them to form up in Russell Square and follow a specific route to Whitehall. The police operation was led by Commander Adam Slonecki, who noted the high number of arrests in response to the escalation in criminality.
4. <https://news.met.police.uk/news/met-ready-for-busy-weekend-of-protests-and-other-events-495139> - The Metropolitan Police prepared for a busy weekend in London, anticipating two significant protests and other events. On Saturday, a march organised by groups under the Palestine Coalition banner was set to assemble on Piccadilly, near Green Park Station, at midday. The march was scheduled to proceed via Piccadilly Circus, Haymarket, Cockspur Street, and into Whitehall, where a rally would take place. A counter-protest, organised by the group Stop the Hate, was planned in Coventry Street, just off Piccadilly Circus. The police had imposed conditions under the Public Order Act on both protests to manage the events effectively.
5. <https://palestinecampaign.org/palestine-coalition-statement-march-route-announced/> - The Palestine Coalition announced the route for their demonstration on Saturday, 15 March. The assembly was planned for 12 noon on Piccadilly (Green Park) to march to Whitehall. The coalition had been in communication with the police for several weeks regarding the march and proposed route. The police had agreed to the route but imposed conditions to prevent assembly on Park Lane, citing concerns raised by pro-Israel groups about synagogues not being on the march route.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/gaza-london-parliament-whitehall-downing-street-b1163080.html> - Thousands gathered along Whitehall for a pro-Palestinian protest calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. Participants, including children, parents, the elderly, and the disabled, marched from Russell Square to Parliament. One speaker estimated at least 150,000 people attended. Protesters waved flags and placards, chanting slogans such as 'free, free Palestine' and 'in our thousands, in our millions, we are all Palestinians'. Various speakers, including the Palestinian ambassador to the UK, Husam Zomlot, addressed the crowd from a stage outside Parliament.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/feb/02/pro-palestine-march-in-london-will-end-near-downing-street-say-police> - The Guardian reports on a pro-Palestine march in London, organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC), which was permitted by the Metropolitan Police to conclude near Downing Street. Initially, the police had refused the request, citing concerns over resources and potential disruption. However, after discussions, the police agreed to allow the march to end in Whitehall. The march was expected to draw an estimated 300,000 demonstrators marching from Portland Place to Whitehall. The article highlights the challenges in balancing the right to protest with the impact on businesses and residents.