

**Oral Statement Item 3: interactive dialogue with Special Rapporteur on
Freedom of Expression Prepared and Submitted 17.06.2025 by the Islamic
Human Rights Commission (UK)**



Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) is a not-for-profit campaign, research and advocacy organisation founded and based in the United Kingdom. It was set up in 1997 and works for redress of human rights violations and a better understanding of rights and norms across confessional, ethnic, national, political and other boundaries.

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The pro-Palestine movement has faced significant repression across various contexts, including policing and legal actions, and social and political pressure.

According to the evidence collected by IHRC, policing and legal actions include: 1) restrictions on protests, with some banning them outright or severely limiting where and how they can be held; 2) mass arrests and detentions, most of them resulting in criminal charges; 3) threats of legal action, including civil rights complaints and undue investigations; 4) excessive force by law enforcement against protesters, including physical violence and mistreatment; 5) suspension and expulsions of student groups involved in activism.

Actions of Social and Political Pressure reported to IHRC have also included cases of censorship and deplatforming, particularly in media and academia, along with cases of stigmatization and accusations of antisemitism and other forms of hate speech, and last but not least cases of pressure upon the universities to defund and disinvest from organizations associated with the pro-Palestine movement.

Such a repression is aimed at delegitimize the cause of Pro-Pal movements, and it is animated in part by right-wing officials using this moment as an opportunity to advance their own political agenda of anti-immigrant policies and to advance the same objective of censoring and criminalising critical opinion, shrinking the space for civil disobedience and reducing the influx of migrants, to the detriment of those fundamental rights that Western States hypocritically claim to champion.

To end, IHRC wants to recall here the fundamental principles set forth in the so-called UN Human Rights Defenders Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in 1999, especially when stating that: (art.1) “everyone has the right to promote and to strive for the protection and realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”; (art. 2) “to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms”; (art.3) “States must take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights” (art. 12).