

**WAR ON  
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# RED CARD

**English Premier League  
sportswashing of Israel's  
atrocities against the  
Palestinians**



# RED CARD: English Premier League sportswashing of Israel's atrocities against the Palestinians

May 2026

Neil Sammonds was the lead author of this report with data methodology and analysis by Constance Baillie.

## Acknowledgements

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Cover image: Bethlehem, West Bank, February 2026: Children play football near graffiti painted on the Separation Wall by the Palestinian artist Taqi Spateen. It depicts a referee showing a red card to an Israeli military bulldozer and reads 'Save the football field of Aida Refugee Camp' as it continues to face demolition threats by Israeli forces. © Wisam Hashlamoun/Anadolu via Getty Images

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# 1. Introduction

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**The English Premier League (EPL) is arguably the world's best national football league. It is certainly the most watched, with games broadcast to 200 countries and with up to 2 billion followers. It is also the most lucrative football league, with an estimated revenue of over £10 billion annually.**

The report exposes an injustice at the heart of our beautiful game. EPL clubs, the EPL itself and the English Football Association (FA) are at risk of complicity in Israel's genocide, illegal occupation, and apartheid against the Palestinian people.

Players' kits, football stadiums, club websites, and expanding lines of club merchandise are adorned with the branding of companies that facilitate and profit from Israel's atrocities. These sponsors also often serve as wider corporate partners, deepening the scope of their engagement through 'digital', 'soft drinks', or 'financial' partnerships.

**Football clubs have a responsibility to their fans and to the communities in which they are based because of their strong cultural role. Sponsorships from companies linked to harmful practices enable companies to improve their image through sport. Exposing these links to both football clubs and to the public is important as it promotes transparency, helps fans make informed choices, protects vulnerable groups, and holds both clubs and corporations accountable thereby encouraging higher ethical standards.**

**By promoting these companies to fans and followers of the EPL, and by associating them with their clubs' beloved names, the clubs are sportswashing<sup>1</sup> the companies and normalising<sup>2</sup> the atrocities. This is not only unethical but risks rendering them complicit in war crimes.**

Considerable work has been done to highlight the EPL's sponsorship by other harmful sectors, including fossil fuels, gambling<sup>3</sup> and alcohol. However very little has been done until now to highlight the EPL's links with what are arguably the gravest and best-documented war crimes of this century, those carried out by Israel against the Palestinian people.

*Red Card* seeks to address this deficit by exposing the apparent complicity of the EPL in the destruction of Palestinian lives. The research draws on public information on EPL clubs' corporate sponsors and cross-references it with authoritative resources on companies known to be involved in Israel's illegal settlement enterprise in the West Bank and its genocide of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip. The report also highlights how some EPL clubs are owned by individuals or entities who may be complicit in Israel's as well as others' war crimes. In the search for financial liquidity, clubs risk damaging their hard-earned reputations and brands through their owners' actual and potential links to war crimes.

The widespread sponsorship of the EPL by companies complicit in atrocities must be urgently addressed. First and foremost, stakeholders must ban sponsorship of football clubs by companies complicit in genocide and apartheid. Individual clubs must then drop such sponsors as quickly as possible. Even more substantially, the companies must urgently end their complicity in Israel's atrocities. Clubs, the EPL and the FA should also ensure that players, staff and supporters are not sanctioned for expressing peaceful solidarity with victims of genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid.

Recognising then promptly ending sponsoring by companies complicit in systematic racism and other atrocities abroad must take place alongside more robust strategies to tackle racism and discrimination in the world of football and wider society at home. Despite some strides taken in recent decades to challenge racism, Black players constitute 43% of all players of the EPL yet only 3.2% of senior staff<sup>4</sup>. Short breaks during matches in Ramadan for Muslim players to break their fasts have been booed by supporters<sup>5</sup>, and the abuse is mostly ignored by mainstream media and politicians.

Antisemitism continues in and around EPL football grounds<sup>6</sup> and is “common through football”<sup>7</sup>. Football sector-related online hate against women and girls, LGBTQI people and people with disabilities is reportedly increasing<sup>8</sup>. The EPL’s failings here are epitomised by its ongoing sponsorship by Barclays Bank, a long-standing enabler of apartheid<sup>9</sup>. While everyone wants financially viable clubs and leagues, these should not be built on profiteering around systematic racism and other atrocities. Senior leaders at clubs, the EPL, the FA, in regulatory bodies as well as in government, need to address systemic injustices like these or risk being seen as root causes of the problems themselves.

It is high time to recognise the prominence in football of companies fuelling and profiting from genocide and apartheid – and show it the red card. There are challenges to overcome in asking business partners to amend their harmful policies and practices, in leaving them if they do not improve, and in identifying and transitioning to ethical partners<sup>10</sup>. But these are positive opportunities too, through which everyone – except those fuelling and perpetrating atrocities – wins.

UK public opinion is strongly opposed to Israel’s actions, large majorities support the arrests of indicted war criminals and oppose US President Trump’s plans for the Palestinians of Gaza, and half or more support sanctions on Israel because of its conduct.<sup>11</sup> More than twice as many Britons see Israel as a threat rather than an ally, strong majorities support a full arms embargo on Israel and pension fund divestment from companies linked to Israel.<sup>12</sup> Across major European countries polled on their opinions of the conduct of Israel and the Palestinians, fewer than a fifth of the public had a favourable view of Israel.<sup>13</sup> Banning EPL sponsorship by companies linked to atrocities – whoever the perpetrators are – would be the necessary, ethical and popular next step in kicking complicity in genocide and apartheid out of football.

## **Corporations and settler-colonialism**

**Corporations have for centuries been involved in the displacement of Indigenous people from their lands, including by mass killing and destruction. Companies have facilitated and profited from the violence including the pillage of resources and the construction and expansion of settler-colonial powers’ presence in those lands.**

**This report builds on others in highlighting the role of the private sector in the displacement of Indigenous people and their replacement by colonisers. It shows the role of often seemingly benign companies in serving the needs and wants of the colonisers and of financial institutions in enabling these criminal demographic upheavals. Breaches of international law may be perpetrated by states and their armed forces but are enabled by a web of corporate interests, senior executives and officials, lawyers, administrators and others. The arms companies which manufacture weapons used by a settler in an attack on an elderly farmer in the West Bank constitute one end of the web while a high street bank funding companies involved in building that settler’s home constitutes a second. A football club promoting that bank to its supporters is a third. There are different levels of responsibility, but all must be held to account and the crimes and injustices must end.**

## 2. Executive summary

The research assesses sponsorship of EPL clubs by four categories of companies complicit in Israel's atrocities against the Palestinian people:

-  **Tech and surveillance** companies facilitating genocide and apartheid
-  Companies involved in the **destruction of Palestinian homes and the sustaining of illegal settlements**
-  Companies enabling Israel's crimes through **finance and energy**
-  Companies providing other **material and ideological support** for Israel's atrocities.

The research finds that at least 16 companies sponsoring EPL clubs are complicit in and profiteering from Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid. An additional eight companies risk complicity.

- Seven tech and surveillance companies facilitating genocide and apartheid sponsor EPL clubs: **Canon, Cisco, Google/Alphabet, HPE, Meta, Oracle** and **Sony** (as well as industrial Artificial Intelligence tech company **IFS** from additional credible sources). An eighth tech company, **Microsoft**, sponsors the EPL itself, rather than at club level.
- Three companies in addition to the seven tech companies above are involved in the construction and sustaining of illegal Israeli settlements and inherently in the destruction of Palestinian homes and lands that preceded them: **Coca-Cola, Carlsberg** and **Expedia/Hotels.com** (as well as **Pepsi**).
- Six companies are enabling Israel's atrocities with finance and fuel: **AXA, BP, Eurobank, Evelyn Partners, HSBC** and **Standard Chartered** (as well as **American Express**).
- Three companies give other material and ideological support for Israel's atrocities: **Google/Alphabet, Facebook** and **WhatsApp** whose parent company is **Meta**, and **Oracle** (as well as **Deel, Emirates, Etihad, PUMA, Wix** and **X**).

At least ten of the 20 clubs in the EPL are directly sponsored by companies complicit in Israel's atrocities: **Arsenal, Aston Villa, Chelsea, Crystal Palace, Everton, Fulham, Liverpool, Manchester City, Manchester United** and **Tottenham Hotspur**.

An eleventh club, **Newcastle United**, is implicated via its effective ownership by Saudi Arabia<sup>14</sup> which has endorsed US President Trump's colonial, deeply unjust and misleadingly named "Board of Peace". **Arsenal, Fulham, Manchester City** and **Manchester United** also risk complicity in atrocities through the activities of their owners.

**Brighton** and **Burnley** have sponsors risking complicity – **American Express** and **X**, respectively. A further six such companies sponsor other clubs: **IFS, Deel, Emirates, Pepsi, PUMA** and **Wix**.

In addition, **every single one of the 20 clubs is indirectly sponsored by Barclays** – the main sponsor as well as "Banking Partner" of the EPL – and advertises the complicit bank around their stadiums and beyond. This is despite Barclays' decades-long documented links to systematic racial discrimination – both in apartheid South Africa and in Israel's apartheid against Palestinians – as well as to arms and other companies involved in Israel's other war crimes in Gaza and the West Bank. Using the data for *Red Card*, no further links were found between seven of the clubs (**Bournemouth, Brentford, Leeds, Nottingham Forest, Sunderland, West Ham, and Wolverhampton Wanderers**) – through their sponsors, known business partners and owners – and Israel's atrocities<sup>15</sup>.

**Brighton, Crystal Palace, Everton and Fulham** risk complicity in atrocities through the significant involvement of complicit institutional investors BlackRock and Vanguard in the finances of several of their corporate sponsors.

**Arsenal, Brighton, Burnley and Everton** have acted towards staff and supporters in ways that may breach the right to freedom of expression and/or amount to discrimination.

**Manchester City** is credited for comments made by its coach, Pep Guardiola, in support of the lives and human rights of Palestinian and other children.

Barclays Bank, Coca-Cola and Microsoft are complicit sponsors of the EPL, while PUMA is at risk of complicity.

Google Cloud and Google Pixel of tech giant Google/Alphabet are complicit sponsors of the English Football Association, while Pepsi and Disney both risk complicity.

The research also concludes that the world's governing body, FIFA, needs an overhaul. FIFA has proven itself to be aligned with the perpetrators of genocide and apartheid and to have sacrificed international law and fairness in their interests. The football sector in the UK and globally must challenge and help address this.

<p><b>Alphabet</b></p>  <p><b>Arsenal</b> <b>L.F.C.</b></p>	<p><b>AXA</b></p>  <p><b>L.F.C.</b></p>	<p><b>bp</b></p>  <p><b>Tottenham Hotspur</b></p>	<p><b>Canon</b></p>  <p><b>Manchester United</b></p>
<p><b>Carlsberg</b></p>  <p><b>Crystal Palace F.C.</b> <b>L.F.C.</b></p>	<p><b>CISCO</b></p>  <p><b>Manchester City</b></p>	<p><b>Coca-Cola</b></p>  <p><b>Arsenal</b> <b>Aston Villa</b> <b>Tottenham Hotspur</b> <b>Chelsea</b> <b>Manchester United</b></p>	<p><b>Expedia</b></p>  <p><b>Arsenal</b> <b>L.F.C.</b></p>
<p><b>EUROBANK</b></p>  <p><b>Manchester United</b></p>	<p><b>evelyn PARTNERS</b></p>  <p><b>Manchester City</b></p>	<p><b>HPE</b></p>  <p><b>Everton</b> <b>Tottenham Hotspur</b></p>	<p><b>HSBC</b></p>  <p><b>Tottenham Hotspur</b></p>
<p><b>Meta</b></p>  <p><b>Arsenal</b></p>	<p><b>ORACLE</b></p>  <p><b>Sheff Wed</b></p>	<p><b>SONY</b></p>  <p><b>Manchester City</b></p>	<p><b>standard chartered</b></p>  <p><b>L.F.C.</b></p>

# 3. Methodology

The evidence bases for the key findings – including for the League of Complicity – are five authoritative and widely respected databases and resources. Coordinators of the resources rely on the most credible of sources and engage with the companies regarding their findings. Additional evidence from credible human rights organisations and media outlets also informs the report.

**i) UN Database of Business Enterprises Pursuant to UN Human Rights Council Resolutions 31/36 and 53/25.** This database<sup>16</sup> was established by the United Nations to track corporations involved in Israel's illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank. The database currently lists 158 business enterprises that have “directly and indirectly enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements”. More companies are expected to be added in 2026.

**ii) Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967,** *From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide.* This report<sup>17</sup> by the United Nations' top independent expert on human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) details the activities of many companies involved in Israel's illegal occupation and genocide.<sup>18</sup>

**iii) Who Profits, *Who Profits Database of Complicit Companies.*** Who Profits is an independent research organisation based in Israel monitoring the role of the private sector in Israel's illegal occupation. The database<sup>19</sup> lists 470 companies (126 of them relating to occupied Syria) active in the displacement of Palestinians and Syrians from their homes and lands and/or their replacement by illegal Israeli settlements and hundreds of thousands of settlers both in the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan. Many are relatively small Israeli businesses without financial links to Europe.

**iv) Don't Buy Into Occupation (DBIO), *Database of European Creditors Involved in Illegal Settlements and/or Apartheid & Genocide.*** DBIO, which War on Want is a member of, is a coalition of European and Palestinian organisations investigating the relationships between European financial institutions and companies involved in Israel's

illegal occupation and genocide. DBIO's report<sup>20</sup> and database<sup>21</sup> of 104 companies is drawn from the UN, Who Profits and AFSC databases as well as company publications and some authoritative media articles. DBIO lists 1,115 European financial institutions and data on their financial links with the 104 companies.

**v) The Investigate database<sup>22</sup> of the Action Center for Corporate Accountability of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC).** Founded by the Quakers, the AFSC provides information on companies involved in Israel's apartheid and other abuses against Palestinians, to guide ethical investment choices.

A club's corporate sponsor or business partner is described as **complicit** when its involvement, (including that of its parent or subsidiary company, or of its owner or a major investor) in Israel's interlocking crimes of genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid has been documented by one or more of the five authoritative resources. A club's corporate sponsor or business partner is considered at **risk of complicity** if a) it is partly owned by or has business relationships with a company listed in the five resources, or b) if credible reports outside of the five resources indicate links to the atrocities.

The five resources are not exhaustive. There are likely many further companies involved in Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid. Information on the sponsors of EPL clubs was gathered via the clubs' own websites, as well as of the EPL and the English FA, and cross referenced with the five authoritative resources above. Information from other credible sources was also obtained and analysed. EPL clubs may well have other potentially complicit sponsors/partners and there may be additional links through owners and directors not known by the authors of *Red Card*.

War on Want and the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians (ICJP) sent letters with information and concerns to each of the priority clubs in March 2026, as well as to the FA and the EPL. Advanced copies of the final report were also sent to the clubs, FA and EPL. No responses were received from any club, or the EPL. The FA sent a very short reply.

# 4. International law

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It is widely recognised that Israel's actions in Gaza amount to **genocide**, even if – as might be expected – the perpetrators (Israel, heavily supported and enabled by the US) and their close allies (UK, Germany etc) deny it. Israel has killed at least 72,000 people and injured 172,000 in Gaza, most of them civilians<sup>23</sup>. At least 20,000 children have been killed, and more than 58,000 children have lost one or both parents<sup>24</sup>. At least 21,000 Gaza children have been permanently disabled<sup>25</sup> and 90,000 children admitted to hospital with acute malnutrition – likely a mere fraction of the true number affected<sup>26</sup>. Over one million children in Gaza require mental health and psychosocial support, with 96% of children feeling death is imminent<sup>27</sup>. All school-age children in Gaza have been deprived of access to formal education for at least 2 years and 93% of schools have been destroyed or severely damaged<sup>28</sup>. Around 1,700 health workers have been killed<sup>29</sup>.

The fatality figures are likely gross underestimates, with The Lancet medical journal among others indicating that the real number of fatalities is up to 186,000 or more<sup>30</sup>. At least 92% of homes in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged<sup>31</sup>. Four hundred UN workers<sup>32</sup> and more than 270 journalists<sup>33</sup> have been killed – the most for both categories during any military operation in history. As early as January 2024, the world's highest court, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) found in a preliminary ruling that it was “plausible” that Israel was committing genocide. The UN-appointed Independent Commission of Inquiry concluded<sup>34</sup> that Israel has committed genocide in Gaza, a conclusion also reached by UN human rights experts<sup>35</sup>, international human rights organisations<sup>36</sup>, Palestinian human rights organisations<sup>37</sup>, Israeli human rights organisations<sup>38</sup>, the International Association of Genocide Scholars<sup>39</sup>, and hundreds if not thousands of international law scholars<sup>40</sup>. In addition, the International Criminal Court (ICC), the world's highest criminal court for investigating and prosecuting suspected perpetrators of war crimes, issued arrest warrants in November 2024 for Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu and then Minister of Defence Gallant<sup>41</sup>.

There is no doubt that Israel **illegally occupies** the Palestinian territory and perpetrates systematic discrimination and segregation – **apartheid** – against Indigenous Palestinians. Israel seized the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip in 1967 and has controlled them ever since, despite the illegality of the occupation. Israel has built and continues to build and expand illegal settlements on the Palestinians' lands – and is doing so at an accelerated rate<sup>42</sup>. It has forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of Indigenous Palestinian inhabitants and subjects those who remain to widespread and systematic abuses and harms<sup>43</sup>, including through its system of apartheid.

Apartheid is a system of prolonged and cruel discriminatory treatment by one racial group against another group. It was first used to describe the system of racist discrimination and control in South Africa by white people over black people. The ICJ confirmed the illegality of Israel's occupation and their use of apartheid in its July 2024 advisory opinion. This added to the large body of evidence on Israel's apartheid system against Palestinians from UN bodies and UN rights experts, international human rights organisations including Amnesty International<sup>44</sup> and Human Rights Watch<sup>45</sup>, Palestinian and Israeli<sup>46</sup> human rights organisations, among others. Apartheid is a crime against humanity and a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The ICJ and UN rights experts have demanded not only that Israel ends the genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid but that the UK and all other states take actions to help rapidly end these illegal situations. The UK government has to date failed woefully in these regards. In fact, the UK continues to supply Israel with arms, to trade with and allow investment in settlements despite formally recognising them as illegal, to allow British and other nationals to join Israel's armed forces without even investigating their possible involvement in war crimes and to allow British people to visit or live in the illegal settlements.



Suleiman Al-Obeid's widow and son remember him as they sit inside their tent in Gaza City in August 2025. Known as the "Palestinian Pele," Al-Obeid was shot dead while waiting for humanitarian aid.

Obligations extend to businesses as well as states. There is corporate responsibility for violations of human rights, international humanitarian law and crimes under international law. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) provide the framework for this<sup>47</sup>. Businesses' responsibility to uphold human rights and international law exists irrespective of whether the government in which they are based or operate is itself upholding international law. Businesses should be held accountable for involvement in atrocities even if they have complied with the domestic laws. The UN's top business and human rights experts demanded<sup>48</sup> in 2024 that not only states, but arms companies supplying weaponry to Israel (highlighting several mentioned in *Red Card*) and investors in those companies (naming two cited in *Red Card*) must act to cease arms transfer to Israel. Continuing to provide or assist arms transfers to Israel risks complicity in atrocity crimes.

The UN Commission of Inquiry<sup>49</sup> called on the UK and other states to ensure that "individuals and corporations in their territories and within their jurisdiction are not involved in the commission of













genocide, aiding and assisting the commission of genocide or incitement to commit genocide and investigate and prosecute those who may be implicated in these crimes under international law". *Red Card* will be shared with the UK government to remind it of its obligations to not only end its assistance to illegal occupation and apartheid but to help prevent and punish genocide including by investigating individuals allegedly involved. The UK government has to date failed woefully in this regard.

*Red Card* refers to Israel's interlocking crimes of genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid as **atrocities**. As stated above, a company is described as **complicit** in atrocities when its involvement (including that of its parent or subsidiary company) in them has been documented by one or more of the five authoritative resources (of the UN, the UN Special Rapporteur, AFSC, Who Profits and the DBIO). A company is considered at **risk of complicity** in Israel's atrocities if it is partly owned by or has business relationships with a company listed in the five resources, or if credible reports outside of the five resources indicate that it has links to the atrocities.

# 5. Findings of complicity

## Premier League Table of Complicity

The five authoritative sources are the sole basis for the table's points tallies. A complicit company sponsor<sup>50</sup> scores one point however many columns it may be referenced in.

Rank	Club	No. of complicit sponsors					Total	RC
		IT	DS	FE	MI	BB		
1	 LIVERPOOL	1	2	2	0	1	6	
=2	 ARSENAL	2	2	0	0	1	5	(2)
=2	 TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR	1	1	3	0	1	5	
=4	 MANCHESTER CITY	2	0	1	0	1	4	(3)
=4	 MANCHESTER UNITED	1	1	1	0	1	4	
=6	 ASTON VILLA	0	1	0	0	1	2	
=6	 CHELSEA	0	1	0	0	1	2	(1)
=6	 CRYSTAL PALACE	0	1	0	0	1	2	
=6	 EVERTON	1	0	0	0	1	2	(1)
=6	 FULHAM	1	0	0	0	1	2	
=11	 BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION	0	0	0	0	1	1	(1)
=11	 BURNLEY	0	0	0	0	1	1	(1)
=13	BOURNEMOUTH, BRENTFORD, LEEDS, NEWCASTLE, NOTTINGHAM FOREST, SUNDERLAND, WEST HAM, WOLVERHAMPTON	0	0	0	0	1	1	

IT = Technology and surveillance DS = Destruction of homes / sustaining illegal settlements FE = Finance and energy MI = Material and ideological support BB = Barclays Bank RC = Sponsors at risk of complicity

# The complicity of English Premier League clubs

In alphabetical order, information on the apparent complicity and risks of complicity of the 20 EPL clubs, highlighting data drawn from the five authoritative resources, then from other credible sources. Sponsors linked to atrocities based on documentation by one or more of the five authoritative resources are given in **bold**. Sponsors linked to atrocities based on documentation from outside the five most authoritative resources are underlined. Companies who are not sponsors but are documented as linked to atrocities in one or more of the five authoritative resources are in *italics*.

Some concerns regarding other policies and practices that may breach the human rights of people related to the clubs are also given.

## ARSENAL =2nd

**Google Pixel** (whose parent company is **Google/Alphabet**), **Facebook** and **WhatsApp** (whose parent company is **Meta**), **Coca-Cola** and **Hotels.com** (whose parent company is **Expedia**), are complicit sponsors. Deel and Emirates are sponsors at risk of complicity.

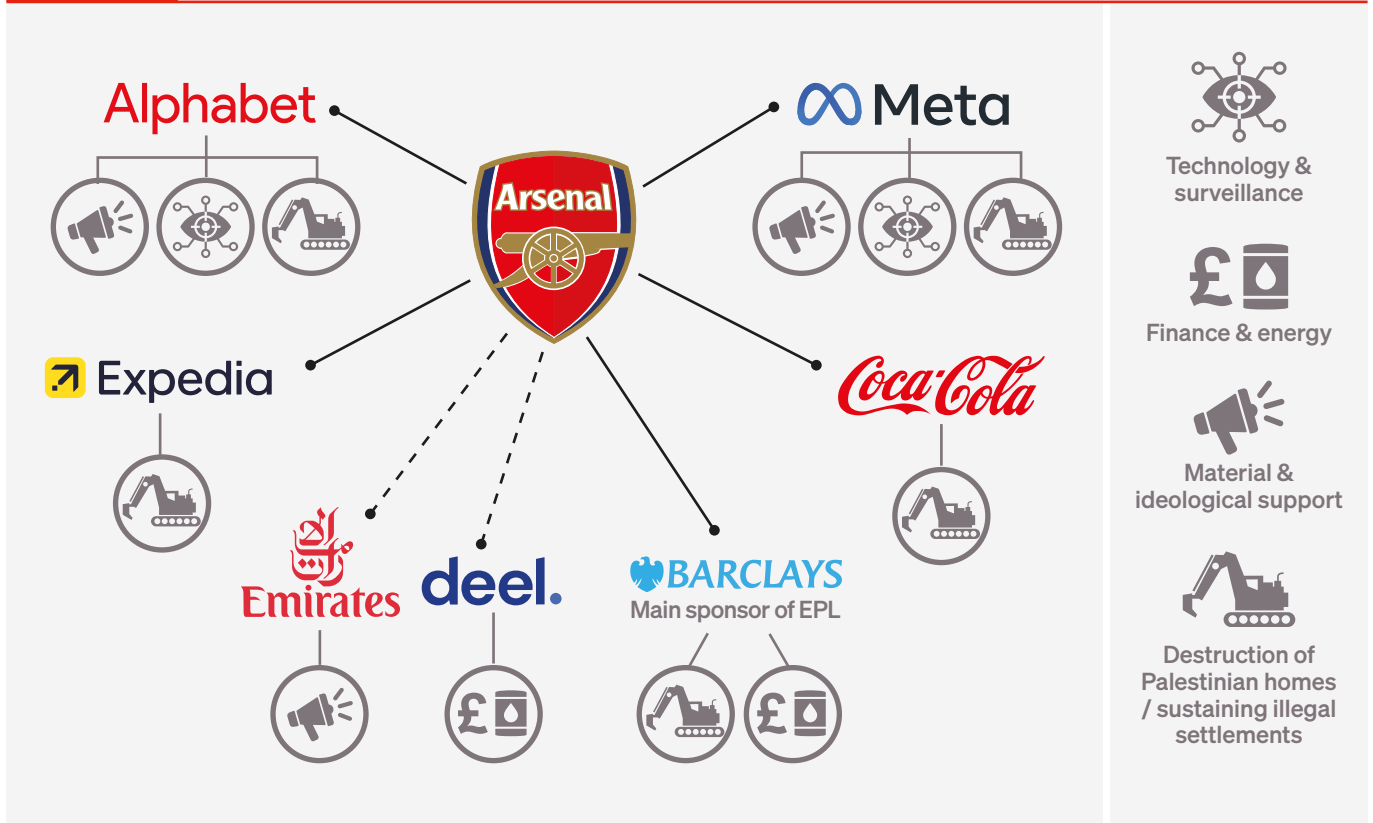
**Google Pixel** is a brand of tech company Google which is a subsidiary company of tech giant *Alphabet Inc.* Alphabet has contracts with Israel's government to provide cloud storage and other core tech infrastructure to support data generated by Israel's apartheid, military and population-control systems. In 2021, Israel awarded Alphabet and others a \$1.2 billion contract, for Project Nimbus, largely funded through Israel's Ministry of Defence. Alphabet grants Israel wide access to their cloud and artificial intelligence technologies, enhancing data processing, surveillance, decision making and analysis capacities. Nimbus provides the platform for Israel's military to run lethal and highly problematic artificial intelligence programmes such as Lavender, Gospel and Where's Daddy<sup>51</sup> to identify targets, central to the Gaza genocide. Their Israel-located servers provide a shield from accountability for war crimes. In July 2024, an Israeli colonel described cloud tech as a weapon in every sense of the word, citing Alphabet among others<sup>52</sup>.

The Israeli military reportedly uses Google Photos' facial recognition features as part of its mass surveillance of Palestinians in Gaza<sup>53</sup>. Google Maps discriminates against Palestinians in multiple ways including by not showing roads used by Palestinians but showing even very small roads which in Israel's apartheid system can only be used by illegal settlers. Google also labels Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel despite the UN not recognising it as such, and Google does not list Palestine as a state, despite the UN recognising it as one since 2012<sup>54</sup>.

Google has repeatedly silenced and retaliated against its workers who have protested its involvement in the Nimbus project<sup>55</sup>.

Social media platform **Facebook** and messaging service **WhatsApp** are both owned by tech giant *Meta*<sup>56</sup>. Meta has long carried out policies and practices in support of Israel's unlawful conduct. Meta has published paid advertisements promoting property sales in illegal Israeli settlements, calling for the demolition of Palestinian homes, and fundraising for Israeli military units in Gaza. The Israeli military has been using data from WhatsApp as part of its surveillance of Palestinians, through which it attempts to identify and kill potential targets<sup>57</sup>. It is unclear whether Meta actively contributed to this effort. Meta has cooperated closely with Israel's military, during one monitored period of October to November 2023 carrying out 95% of its requests to remove Palestinian and pro-Palestinian content<sup>58</sup>. According to Human Rights Watch, Meta has regularly suspended or permanently disabled content related to Palestine by suspending or permanently disabling accounts that peacefully advocate for Palestine, including by labelling legitimate criticism of Israel's unlawful conduct as "hate speech"<sup>59</sup>.

**Coca-Cola's** Israeli licensee is the Central Bottling Company whose subsidiary the *Central Beverage Distribution Company* has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary, *Tabor Winery*, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan.<sup>60</sup> Coca-Cola therefore is involved in illegal occupation, in making the occupation more profitable and in "normalising" the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which the company also benefits from.



**Hotels.com**, a travel app owned by the **Expedia Group**, is “an official and exclusive hotel partner of Arsenal”. Tourism company **Expedia** offers rentals in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan<sup>61</sup>, including via the Hotels.com and Vrbo platforms. Hotels.com has advertised rentals in at least seven illegal settlements in occupied Palestine and in at least 14 illegal settlements in occupied Syria<sup>62</sup>. Expedia and its platforms help make illegal occupation more profitable and “normalise” the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which the company as well as Israel benefit from.

### New deal poor Deel?

In December 2025, Arsenal announced a new partnership with **Deel**, an Israeli human resources and payroll company. **Deel** is already prominently advertised around Arsenal’s stadium and on the TV interview backdrops of corporate sponsors. Senior executives of **Deel** have made statements supporting Israel’s military and provided supplies and clothing for its soldiers even as the armed forces perpetrate war crimes.<sup>63</sup>

### Uncomfortably seated

Arsenal’s stadium, the Emirates, is named after **Emirates Airlines** which is owned by the government of Dubai, part of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). **Emirates Airlines** is also Arsenal’s shirt sponsor. The UAE has close military and economic relations with Israel and a very poor human rights record including for unfair trials and torture and ill-treatment, criminalising freedom of expression and repressing pro-Palestinian sentiments<sup>64</sup>. During Trump’s first presidency, the UAE was criticised for upgrading its relations with Israel through the Abraham Accords, despite Israel’s ongoing atrocities<sup>65</sup>. As detailed by the human rights organisation DAWN, the fanfare hailing the purported “peace” element of the UAE-Israel Accord “conceals the actual central component of the deal: accelerating the rate and ease at which the UAE may obtain Israeli defense tech – especially Israeli spyware and surveillance technology”<sup>66</sup>. The President of the UAE is on Trump’s “Board of Peace”<sup>67</sup> (see more on the Board of Peace in Section 4, Disreputable Owners?). The Gaza genocide is not the only mass atrocity that the UAE is supporting; the UAE has also transferred arms to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in South Sudan despite the armed group committing war crimes<sup>68</sup>. Arsenal’s relationship with **Emirates Airlines** and the UAE consequently risks bringing the club into disrepute.

## Human rights and discrimination

Arsenal abruptly fired Mark Bonnick, their kitman of 22-years' service to the club, on Christmas Eve 2024. Bonnick had posted criticisms of Israel's conduct<sup>69</sup>. Bonnick appears to have been the target of a smear campaign led by a handful of politically motivated individuals making allegations of anti-Semitism against him. The FA investigated the posts and found no misconduct. Arsenal also stated that they did not find any evidence of anti-Semitism, a view shared by Jewish anti-racism campaigners<sup>70</sup>. Nevertheless, Arsenal dismissed him on the grounds that he brought the club "into disrepute." Arsenal appears to have prioritised seemingly prejudiced and racist views of those who targeted him online rather than its staff's livelihood, wellbeing and rights – including the right to freedom of expression in support of people suffering genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid.

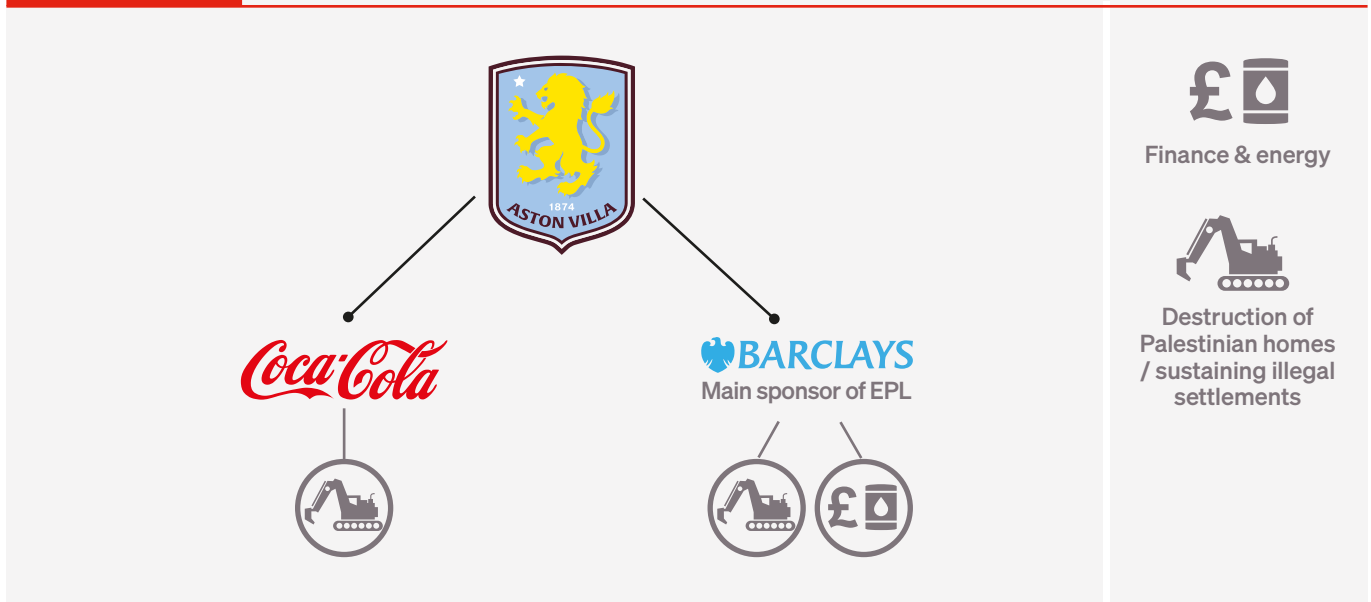
In October 2025, stewards at the Emirates stadium denied entry to a female Arsenal supporter unless she removed the Palestine shirt she was wearing<sup>71</sup>. No replacement clothing was offered. She said she had not known that Arsenal prohibited spectators from wearing such clothing and that she subsequently felt very uncomfortable in a thin top. Arsenal's action appears excessive, arbitrary and discriminatory, and may breach supporters' rights to freedom of expression, including in support of people suffering genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid.

### ASTON VILLA =6th

Coca-Cola is the "Official Soft Drinks Partner, Official Global Partner, and Official Partner" of Aston Villa. Coca-Cola's Israeli licensee is the Central Bottling Company whose subsidiary the Central Beverage Distribution Company has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary, Tabor

Winery, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan. Coca-Cola therefore is involved in illegal occupation, in making the occupation more profitable and "normalising" the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which it also benefits from.

### ASTON VILLA TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 2 | OVERALL RANK: =6th/20



## BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION =11th

Major sponsor American Express risks complicity in Israel's atrocities on account of the complicity of its major investors Vanguard and BlackRock.

The stadium sponsor of Brighton is American Express, after whom the AMEX stadium is named. It is also Brighton's shirt sponsor. American Express is of concern primarily due to major institutional investors in it being Vanguard and BlackRock. Vanguard and BlackRock, at time of writing the second and third largest shareholders<sup>72</sup> in American Express, are "among the largest investors in arms companies pivotal to Israel's genocidal arsenal"<sup>73</sup>. (See box on pages 16-17).

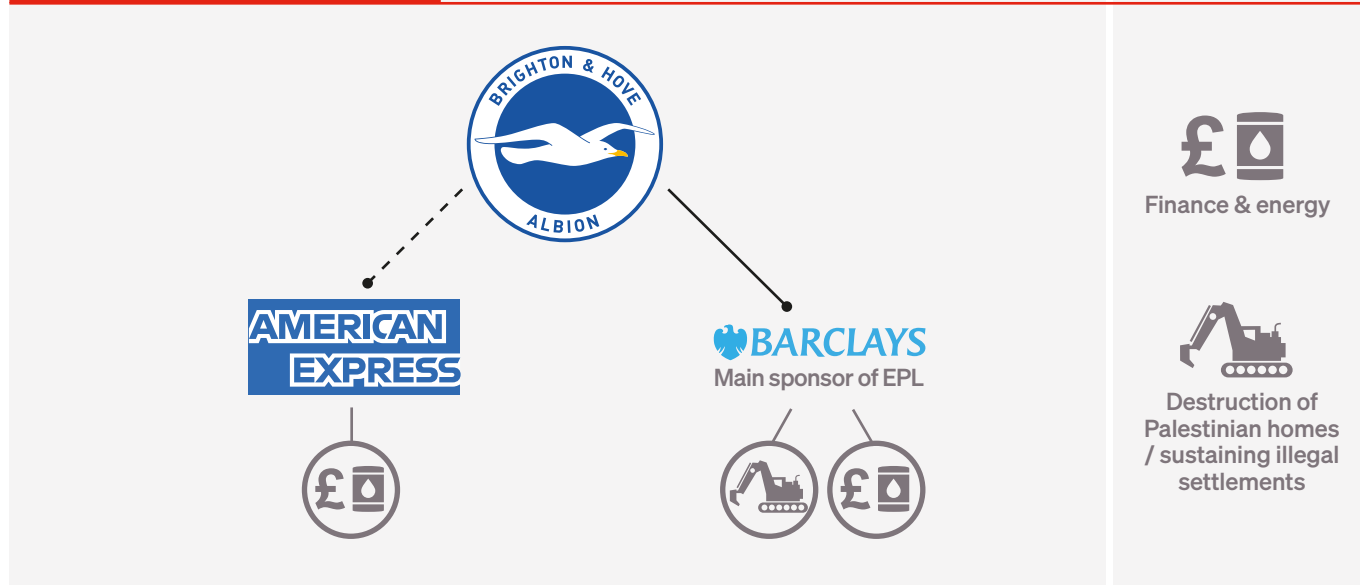
### Human rights and discrimination

Brighton banned season-ticket holder, Roger Wade, for five years from the AMEX after he once wore a Palestine t-shirt inside the stadium<sup>87</sup>. The decision appears highly excessive, arbitrary and discriminatory.

A perpetrator found guilty in court of repeated, verbal and physical racial assaults on staff at another ground, for example, was given a three-year stadium ban<sup>88</sup>.

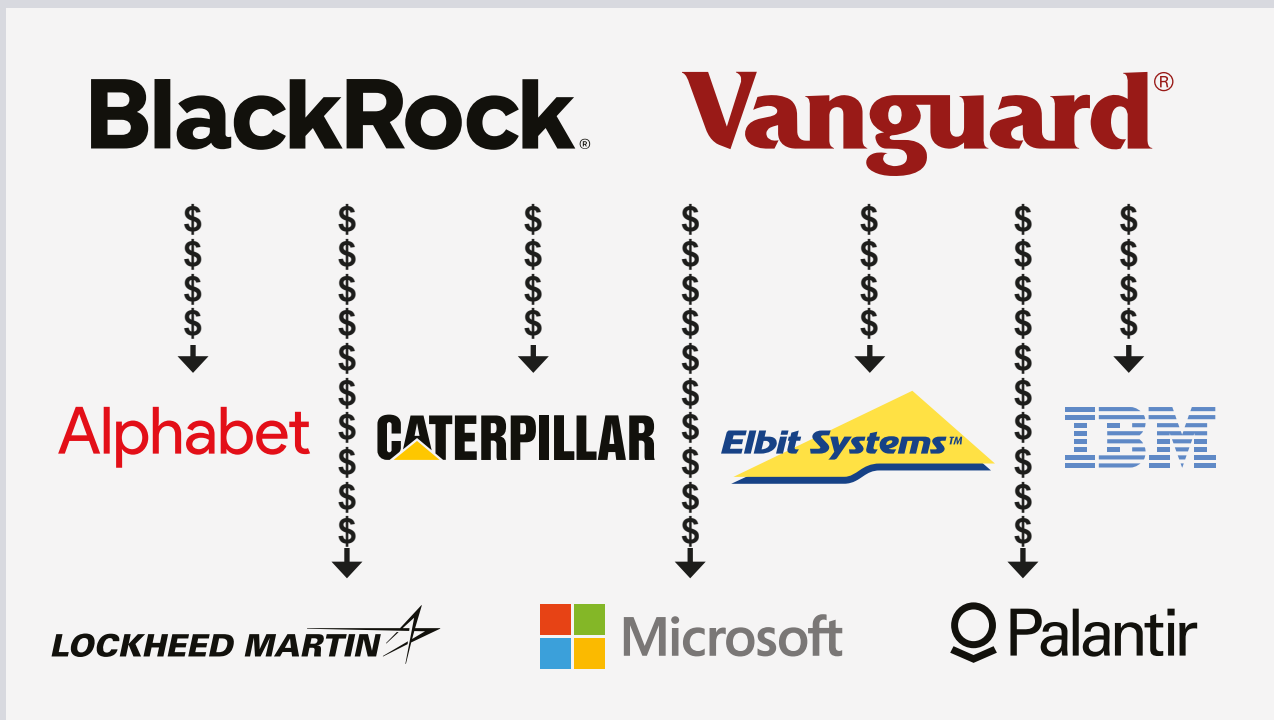
Brighton's harsh treatment of supporter Roger Wade contrasts with its apparent acceptance of seemingly racist and genocide-supporting behaviour by Israeli footballer Tomer Hemed who is a coach and mentor with Brighton's Academy. Social media posts by Mr Hemed show him posing with and praising Israeli soldiers during the genocide in Gaza. Hemed also appeared to dehumanise Palestinians and promote their painful killing, "*Human animals are not human!!! Monsters! Let them die a death of suffering!*", he wrote. Similar language was used by Israel's then Minister of Defence Gallant and cited in the ICC's arrest warrant for his alleged involvement in a series of war crimes and crimes against humanity. One thousand supporters of Brighton wrote to the club complaining but no action was reportedly taken beyond Hemed being reminded of his responsibilities.

## BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 1 | OVERALL RANK: =11th/20



## BlackRock, Vanguard and other Red Card investors and companies

At least six of the EPL clubs (Brighton, Crystal Palace, Everton, Fulham, Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur) have corporate sponsors invested in by US-based BlackRock and Vanguard which are among the largest investors in companies enabling Israel's atrocities. BlackRock, Inc, is reportedly the world's largest asset manager, with around \$12.5 trillion in global assets while Vanguard Group, Inc, reportedly manages around \$12 trillion in global assets. BlackRock and Vanguard have channelled billions of dollars into arms and other companies involved in Israel's genocide and illegal occupation including Alphabet, Caterpillar, Elbit Systems, IBM, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft and Palantir.<sup>74</sup> Vanguard and BlackRock also bought hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of Israeli government bonds which helped sustain Israel's assault on Gaza. Companies and investors in them have been repeatedly informed that their products, services and business dealings contribute to serious violations of international law<sup>75</sup>, but they continue regardless.



**Alphabet:** As Israel's apartheid, military and population-control systems generate increasing volumes of data, its reliance on cloud storage and computing has grown. In 2021, Israel awarded *Alphabet* and others a \$1.2 billion contract (Project Nimbus) – largely funded through Israel's Ministry of Defence to provide core tech infrastructure. Alphabet grants Israel wide access to their cloud and AI technologies, enhancing data processing, decision-making and surveillance/analysis capacities. Nimbus provides the platform for Israel's military to run lethal and highly problematic artificial intelligence programs such as Lavender, Gospel and Where's Daddy<sup>76</sup> – central to the Gaza genocide. Their Israel-located servers provide a shield from accountability for war crimes. In July 2024, an Israeli colonel described cloud tech as “a weapon in every sense of the word”, citing these companies.<sup>77</sup>

**Caterpillar Inc:** For decades, *Caterpillar* has provided Israel with equipment used to demolish Palestinian homes and infrastructure. Caterpillar's D9 bulldozer is core weaponry of the Israeli military, deployed in almost every military activity since 2000. Since October 2023, Caterpillar equipment has been documented carrying out mass demolitions – including of homes, mosques and life-sustaining infrastructure – and crushing Palestinians to death. In 2025, Caterpillar secured a further multi-million-dollar contract with Israel.<sup>78</sup>

Elbit Systems Hermes 450 drone on display at the Farnborough Airshow



Giles Thomas CC: BY-SA 2.0

*Elbit Systems* is one of Israel's foremost arms companies and is among the top 50 arms manufacturers globally. Since 2023, Elbit has cooperated closely in Israeli military operations, embedding key staff in Israel's Ministry of Defence. Elbit provides a critical domestic supply of weaponry to Israel's military<sup>79</sup>, notably drones which are suspected of involvement in multiple unlawful killings.<sup>80</sup>

US-based tech giant *IBM* trains Israel's military/intelligence personnel – especially from the notorious Military Intelligence Unit 8200. Since 2019, IBM Israel has operated and upgraded the central database of the Population, Immigration and Borders Authority (PIBA), enabling collection, storage and governmental use of biometric data on Palestinians, and supporting Israel's discriminatory permit regime<sup>81</sup>.

US arms company *Lockheed Martin* leads the production of F-35 and F-16 fighter jets which are pivotal to the Israeli Air Force. Attacks by F-35s and F-16s with huge payloads have been a central feature of Israel's devastating attacks on Gaza. An estimated 85,000 tons of bombs have been dropped since October 2023.<sup>82</sup>

Technologies of US-based tech giant *Microsoft* are embedded in Israel's prison service, police, universities and schools – throughout which Palestinians including Palestinian citizens of Israel are subjected to discrimination and abuse – including in settlements, all of which are illegal. Microsoft has also integrated its systems across the Israeli military. In October 2023, when the Israeli internal military cloud overloaded, Microsoft, with its Azure platform, and others stepped in with critical cloud and artificial intelligence infrastructure. Microsoft grants Israel virtually government-wide access to their cloud and AI technologies, enhancing data processing, decision-making and surveillance and analysis capacities. Their Israel-located servers ensure data sovereignty and a shield from accountability, under favourable contracts offering minimal restrictions or oversight. In July 2024, an Israeli colonel described cloud tech as a weapon in every sense of the word, citing these companies.<sup>83</sup> Microsoft collaborated with Israel's military to develop trainings and other assistance for Israeli soldiers including those guarding illegal settlements. Microsoft has a policy of matching employee donations to organisations promoting Israel's illegal settlements. Microsoft employees who held a vigil for Palestinians killed by Israel were fired<sup>84</sup>.

US software company *Palantir Technology Inc* expanded its support to Israel's military post-October 2023. Palantir has most likely provided Israel with automatic predictive policing technology as well as its Artificial Intelligence Platform for real-time, automated military decision-making. In January 2024, Palantir announced a new strategic partnership with Israel and held a board meeting in Tel Aviv "in solidarity".<sup>85</sup> Palantir's "advanced data analytics and AI tools that supposedly provide 'precision targeting' are mass-killing civilians and have transformed warfare into a calculated and systematic campaign of extermination with little human oversight".<sup>86</sup>

## BURNLEY =11th

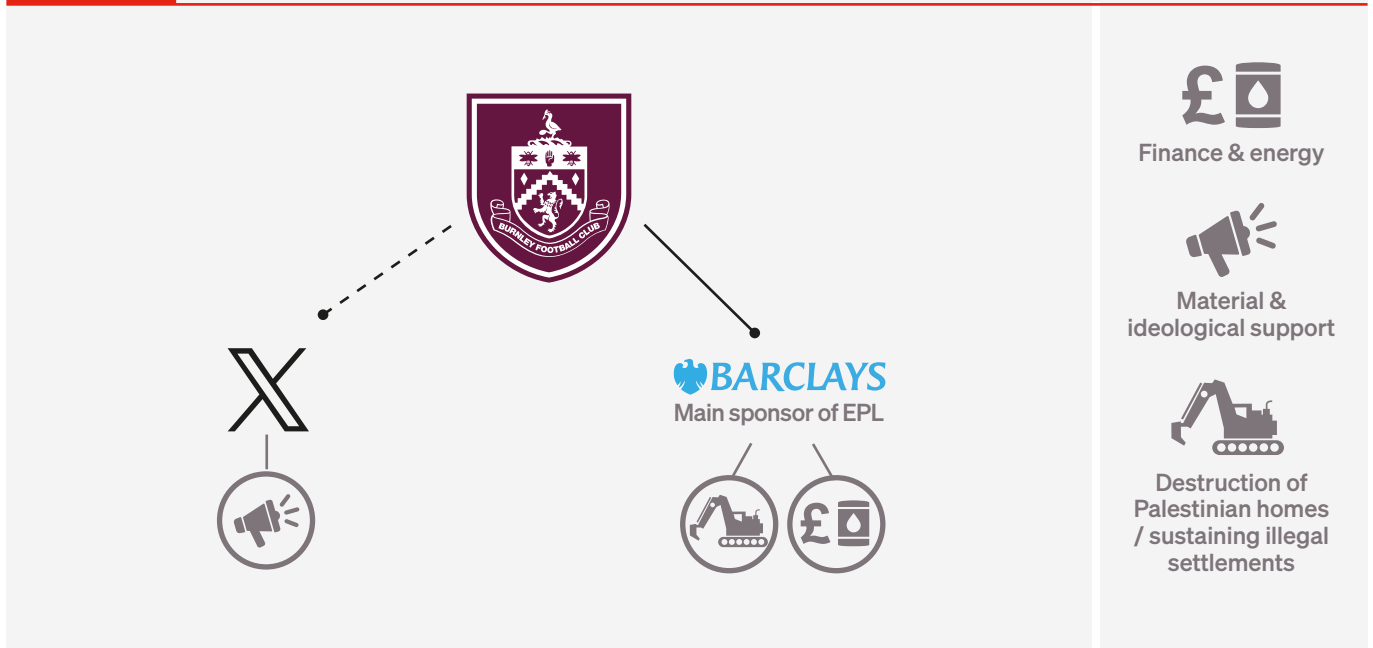
Burnley sponsor X is at risk of complicity in Israel's atrocities.

In July 2025 a multi-year deal was announced between Burnley and X, the social media platform owned by US billionaire Elon Musk and previously named Twitter. X became Burnley's first Strategic Digital Platform Partner. X has transmitted however alarming amounts of hate speech, incitement to violence, and dehumanisation of Palestinians. In the first three months of the genocide on Gaza, digital rights and monitoring organisation 7amleh detected nearly 3 million instances of such violent content in Hebrew targeting Palestinians<sup>89</sup>. These were made by senior Israeli government officials (describing the Palestinian people as "human animals" and "children of darkness", for example) as well as by the Israeli Jewish public. Widespread and large-scale expressions on X of hate speech, incitement to violence, and dehumanisation of Palestinians contributed to unlawful acts in Gaza and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). The International Court of Justice cited examples of incendiary, racist comments on X and other platforms by senior Israeli officials. The Palestinian Digital Rights Coalition wrote to X and other platforms in 2024 raising their serious concerns and demanding that the platforms urgently "fulfill their legal and moral responsibility in respecting human rights and preventing the dissemination of harmful content, including incitement to commit genocide, within their domains".<sup>90</sup>

The billionaire US controller of X, Elon Musk, has made many controversial statements and actions including what were widely regarded as fascist-type arm salutes. X is part owned by the Saudi sovereign wealth fund, Oracle's Larry Ellison, and Sequoia Capital. X uses AU10TIX, an Israeli identity verification company, to verify users for X Premium. AU10TIX was founded by two former Israeli intelligence agents. AU10TIX is a subsidiary of ICTS, a Dutch security firm founded by former members of Israel's security and intelligence agency, Shin Bet.<sup>91</sup> Elon Musk holds an estimated 42% stake in SpaceX, as well as being CEO, Chairman, and CTO. In 2025 SpaceX launched the Dror-1 communication satellite for Israel, which was developed by IAI (*Israel Aerospace Industries*), a state-owned aerospace and arms manufacturer, which designs and manufactures much of Israel's military equipment, from fighter jets to missiles to autonomous armoured bulldozers. SpaceX is not publicly traded, although it is part owned by **Google**, and *Palantir* owner Peter Thiel's Founders Fund.<sup>92</sup> SpaceX is also part owned by Sequoia Capital, which invests significantly in the Israeli tech industry, including providing \$10m in seed capital and a further \$60m in funding for Kela, a defence tech company founded by former IDF members.<sup>93</sup>

## BURNLEY

TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 1 | OVERALL RANK: =11th/20



## Human rights and discrimination

There are concerns over Burnley’s insufficient response to a consultant employee expressing anti-Palestinian racism on X (which preceded by one year the announcement of Burnley’s deal with X). The BBC reported that a “player-care consultant” at the club appeared to ‘like’ a post stating “Palestinians are an invented people” and “were created to be

the biggest Jew haters on Earth”, as well as a post stating “good riddance” to a Palestinian civilian killed by Israel in Gaza<sup>94</sup>. According to media reports, the club backed the individual during an investigation by the FA which went on to “warn” her about her social media activity. It is of concern that Burnley do not appear to have acted with appropriate seriousness regarding racism and possible hate crimes.

## CHELSEA =6th

**Coca-Cola** is complicit and **IFS** is at risk of complicity in Israel’s atrocities.

Chelsea promotes and is an “official supplier” of **Coca-Cola**. Coca-Cola’s Israeli licensee is the Central Bottling Company whose subsidiary the *Central Beverage Distribution Company* has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary, *Tabor Winery*, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan.<sup>95</sup> Coca-Cola therefore is involved in illegal occupation, in making the occupation more profitable and “normalising” the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which it also benefits from.

A new multi-year sponsorship deal between Chelsea FC and industrial artificial intelligence company **IFS** was announced in February 2026. **IFS** works with arms companies including UK-based Babcock<sup>96</sup>.

Babcock has partnered with *Elbit Systems* and *QinetiQ*, *Rafael* and *Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)*, all of which have been involved in Israel’s atrocities.<sup>97</sup>

Part-owner and co-control shareholder of **IFS** is **EQT**. EQT is 3.1% owned by Swedbank Robur, a fully owned subsidiary of Swedbank AB. Swedbank was holding \$25.5 billion in shares and bonds of 36 complicit companies (including *Caterpillar*, *Microsoft* and *Rolls-Royce*) as of 31 August 2025, and provided \$1576 million in loans and/or underwriting to three complicit companies (*Traton*, *Volvo Group* and *WSP Global*) between January 2023 and August 2025. EQT is 14.7% owned by Investor AB, a Swedish investment and holding company which was holding almost \$1 million in shares of *Cellebrite*, a complicit Israeli digital intelligence firm that supplies police, prison, and immigration authorities, as well as repressive regimes around the world, with hacking technologies<sup>98</sup>.

## CHELSEA TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 2 | OVERALL RANK: =6th/20





London, March 2024: A protester on a Palestine solidarity march holds a sign critical of Coca-Cola, whose Israeli licensee has facilities in the illegal settlements.

**CRYSTAL PALACE =6th**

**Carlsberg** is complicit in Israel’s atrocities.

Crystal Palace is sponsored by beer brand **Carlsberg**. In Israel, Carlsberg beer is manufactured and distributed by *Coca-Cola Israel*, also known as the *Central Bottling Company* whose subsidiary the *Central Beverage Distribution Company* has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary of the company, *Tabor Winery*, produces wines from

vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan.<sup>99</sup> Carlsberg therefore is involved in illegal occupation, in making the occupation more profitable and “normalising” the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which it also benefits from.

In addition, *BlackRock* and *Vanguard* are significant shareholders in **Carlsberg**, together holding around 5.5% of its shares<sup>100</sup>. (See box on pages 16-17).

**CRYSTAL PALACE TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 2 | OVERALL RANK: =6th/20**



## EVERTON =6th

HPE is complicit and Pepsi is at risk of complicity in Israel's atrocities.

Everton sponsor **Hewlett Packard Enterprise Company (HPE)** is a US-based information technology provider. Since 2017 HPE has been the sole supplier of Itanium servers for the Israel's Population, Immigration and Borders Authority. PIBA's Registry holds data on Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza as well as Palestinian citizens of Israel. The data is systematically used by Israel for the implementation of discriminatory policies against Palestinians – including with regards movement, travel, voting and access to services. HPE also provides services to Israel's military, police and prison services – all of which systematically violate the rights of Palestinians<sup>101</sup>.

Major institutional investors in HPE are *Vanguard* and *BlackRock*, who own in total around 15% of all HPE's shares<sup>102</sup>. (See box on pages 16-17).

Everton is sponsored by *Pepsi*, the owner of *SodaStream*. *SodaStream* may have withdrawn its principal manufacturing facility in an illegal Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank, following sustained international criticism, but it continues to be involved in serious violations of Palestinians' rights.

*SodaStream* relocated operations to the Negev (Naqab) region inside Israel. Multiple independent reports indicate that the current facility is situated adjacent to, and benefits from, the displacement of unrecognised Bedouin communities, whose homes have been demolished to make way for industrial expansion, including *SodaStream's* plant. Palestinian workers at *SodaStream* factories have also highlighted exploitative labour practices, lack of religious accommodations and discriminatory treatment. Workers have been fired when raising these concerns. Despite these concerns, *SodaStream* misleadingly advertises itself as promoting "diversity", including via a label with the Israeli flag that reads: "This product is produced by Jews and Arabs working side-by-side in peace and harmony."<sup>103</sup>

### Human rights and discrimination

In August 2025 an Everton supporter was reportedly prevented by stewards from entering Hill Dickinson stadium until she covered up her Palestine top<sup>104</sup>, constituting a possible breach of the right to freedom of expression, including in support of people suffering genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid.

## EVERTON

TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 2 | OVERALL RANK: =6th/20



## FULHAM =6th

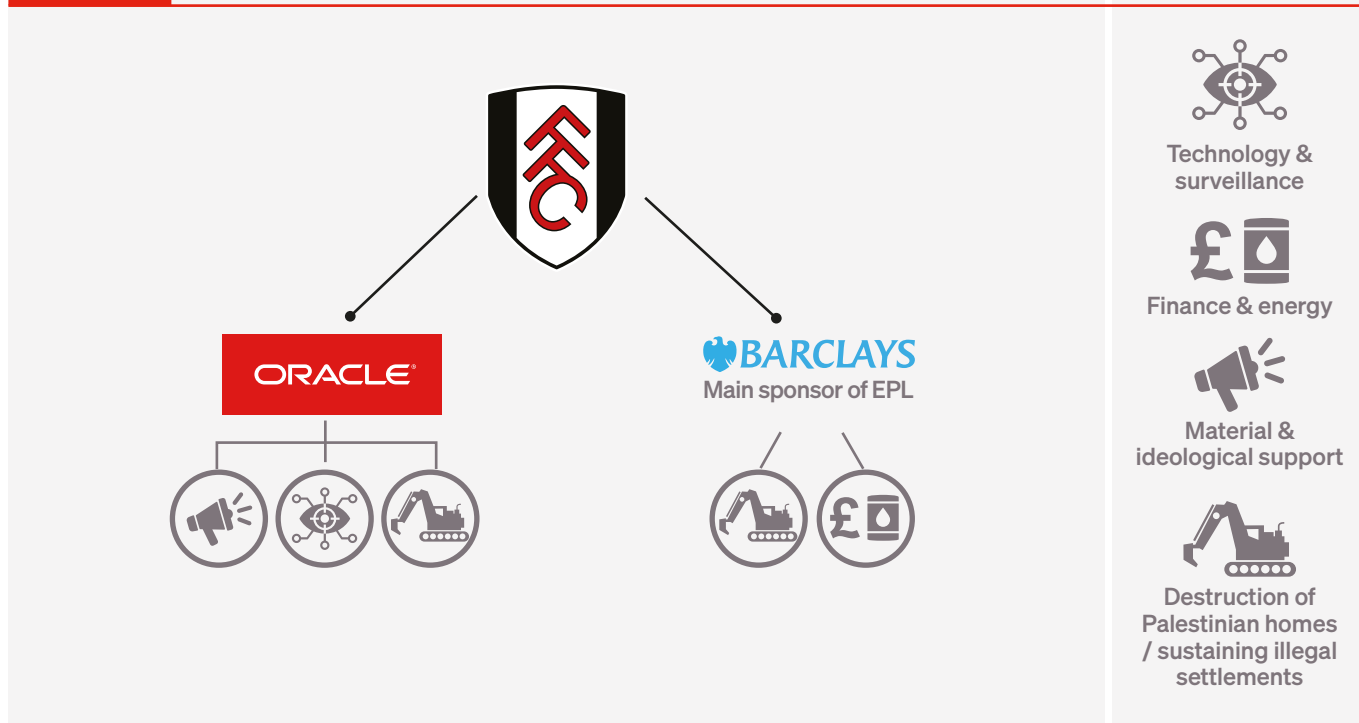
**Oracle** is complicit in Israel's atrocities.

Fulham sponsor **Oracle** is a US-based tech company with a decades-long partnership with the Israeli military, police, security forces and illegal occupation establishment. Oracle facilitated the ability of Israel's military to base its military activities on IT systems as a means of warfare. Oracle Israel provides servers to Israel's Civil Administration, the misleading name of the authority overseeing Israel's illegal, military occupation of the West Bank, thus facilitating Israel's unlawful destruction of Palestinian homes and other repressive and discriminatory policies. In January 2024, Oracle's

CEO met with the Israeli Minister of Defence and Prime Minister Netanyahu – whose arrest warrants would later be issued by the ICC for alleged perpetration of war crimes – to discuss the provision of security assistance and opportunities in the fields of artificial intelligence and cloud computing.<sup>105</sup> Also in January 2024, several months into the genocide, Oracle donated 7 tons of auxiliary equipment worth more than half a million to Israeli army units operating in the Gaza Strip<sup>106</sup>.

Oracle is partly owned by Vanguard and BlackRock, who currently together own around 11% of all shares in **Oracle**<sup>107</sup>. (See box on pages 16-17).

### FULHAM TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 2 | OVERALL RANK: =6th/20

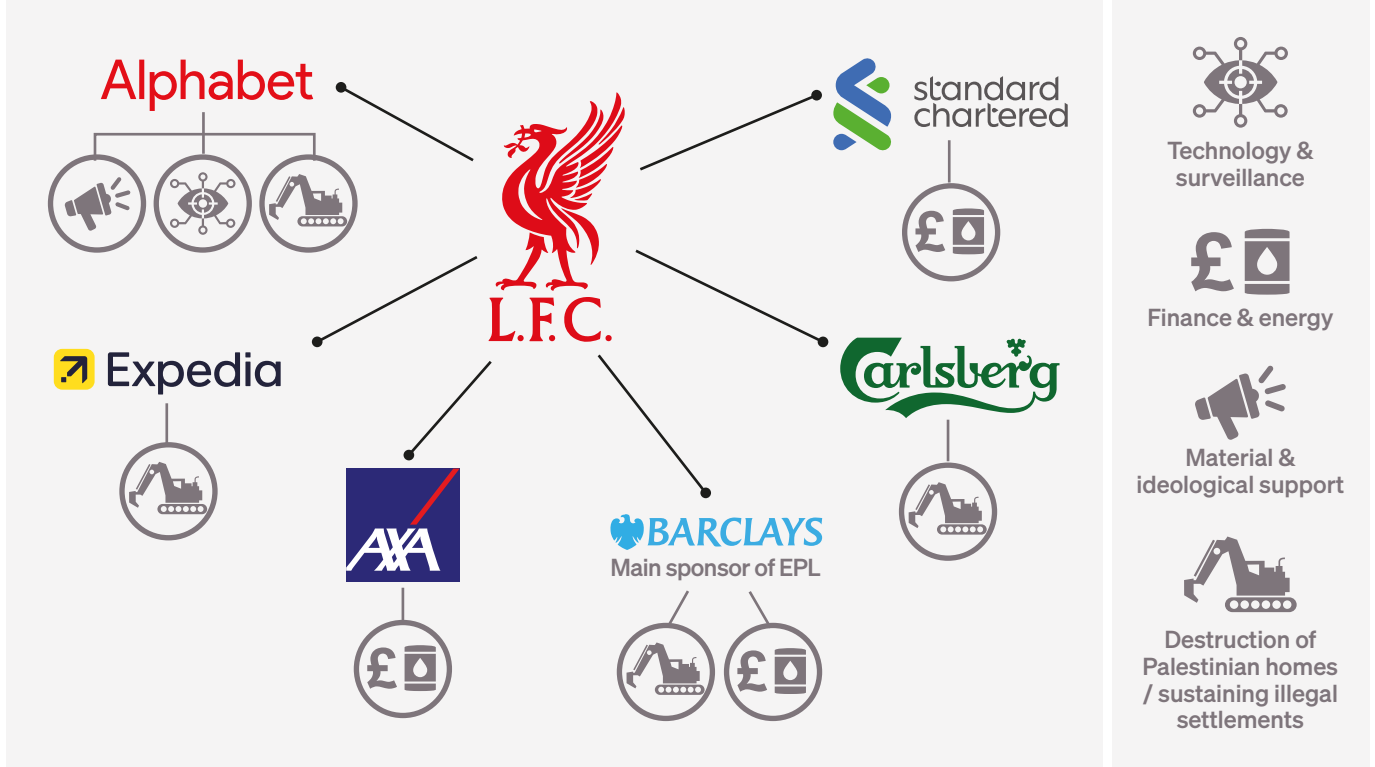


## LIVERPOOL 1st

**Standard Chartered, AXA, Google, Expedia** and **Carlsberg** are sponsors of Liverpool complicit in Israel's atrocities.

UK-based financial institution **Standard Chartered**, which provided \$15.4bn to 24 complicit businesses between January 2023 and August 2025, including *Boeing*<sup>108</sup>, *BP*<sup>109</sup>, *Caterpillar*<sup>110</sup>, *Oracle* and *Rolls-Royce*<sup>111</sup>, making it Europe's eighth largest such creditor. Standard Chartered also owned almost \$61 million in shareholdings in three complicit companies – *BP*, *Rolls Royce* and *Shell* – as of 31 August 2025<sup>112</sup>.

France-based financial institution **AXA** was investing \$9.6bn in 51 designated businesses as of 31 August 2025, including *BAE*<sup>113</sup>, *Boeing*, *BP*<sup>114</sup>, *Caterpillar*<sup>115</sup>, *Chevron*<sup>116</sup> and *General Dynamics*, making it Europe's 30th largest such investor<sup>117</sup>. Weaponry produced by Boeing and General Dynamics, for example, has been directly linked to Israeli attacks on Palestinians in Gaza, including mass killings, such as the bombing of the Tel al-Sultan refugee camp in Rafah and al-Mawasi<sup>118</sup>.



**Google Pixel** is a brand of which is a subsidiary of tech giant Alphabet. Google remains the umbrella company for Alphabet's internet-related businesses. In 2021, Alphabet and others were awarded a \$1.2bn contract (Project Nimbus) – largely funded through Ministry of Defence expenditure – to provide cloud computing services to Israel. As Israel's apartheid, military and population-control systems generate increasing volumes of data, its reliance on cloud storage and computing has grown. Nimbus provides the platform for Israel's military to run lethal and highly problematic artificial intelligence programs such as Lavender, Gospel and Where's Daddy<sup>119</sup>. These have been central to the Gaza genocide. Their Israel-located servers provide a shield from accountability for war crimes. In 2024, an Israeli colonel described cloud tech as "a weapon in every sense of the word", citing these companies.<sup>120</sup> The Israeli military reportedly uses Google Photos' facial recognition features as part of its mass surveillance of Palestinians in Gaza.<sup>121</sup> Google Maps discriminates against Palestinians in multiple ways including by not showing roads used by Palestinians but showing even very small<sup>122</sup>. Google has repeatedly silenced and retaliated against its workers who have protested its involvement in the Nimbus project<sup>123</sup>.

Tourism company **Expedia** which offers rentals in illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan<sup>124</sup>, including via the Hotels.com and Vrbo platforms. Expedia therefore is involved in illegal occupation, in making the occupation more profitable and in "normalising" the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which the company also benefits from.

In Israel, **Carlsberg** beer is manufactured and distributed by *Coca-Cola Israel*, also known as the *Central Bottling Company* whose subsidiary the *Central Beverage Distribution Company* has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary, *Tabor Winery*, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan<sup>125</sup>. Carlsberg is therefore involved in illegal occupation, making the occupation more profitable and "normalising" the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which it also benefits from.

*BlackRock* and *Vanguard* are significant shareholders in **Carlsberg**, together holding around 5.5% of its shares<sup>126</sup>. (See box on pages 16-17).

## MANCHESTER CITY =4th

**Sony, Evelyn Partners** and **Cisco** are complicit sponsors.

Etihad Airways, Wix and PUMA risk complicity in Israel's atrocities.

**Sony Group Corp** is a Japanese multinational electronics manufacturer. Sony contributes to the settlement industry<sup>127</sup> as well as to the Gaza blockade wall, the West Bank separation wall and associated surveillance and checkpoints<sup>128</sup>. Israel has deployed Sony CCTV cameras in the occupied Old City of Jerusalem as part of Israel's system of apartheid and widespread surveillance over Palestinians, and at its military checkpoints in the Gaza Strip<sup>129</sup>.

**Evelyn Partners** is a UK-based financial institution which as of 31 August 2025 was holding \$1.46bn in shares of 31 complicit companies including *BAE*, *BP*<sup>130</sup>, *Caterpillar*, *Chevron*<sup>131</sup>, *Lockheed Martin*, *Palantir* and *Rolls Royce*.<sup>132</sup>

Manchester City have a "technology partnership" with US tech company **Cisco**<sup>133</sup>. Cisco provides servers, computing, cybersecurity tools, and communication systems and equipment to the Israeli military and

the Israel Police. The company has also provided communications and surveillance technology to settlements in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Syrian Golan<sup>134</sup>. As one of the main providers of networking hardware for the Israeli military, Cisco is potentially implicated in the mass killing of tens of thousands of Palestinians, many of them unarmed civilians, as part of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza<sup>135</sup>. Cisco employees raised concerns about the company's activities but were reportedly silenced, harassed and discriminated against<sup>136</sup>.

Manchester City's stadium, the Etihad Stadium, is named after its sponsored Etihad Airways, a major airline of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Manchester City is owned by the City Football Group with 81% of shares held by Sheikh Mansour, a member of the Abu Dhabi royal family and the deputy prime minister of the UAE<sup>137</sup>. As previously mentioned, the UAE has a very poor human rights record and close military and economic ties with Israel for which it has been criticised by Palestinian civil society<sup>138</sup>, not least for agreeing to "normalise" relations with Israel without the latter taking any steps to end its illegal occupation.

## MANCHESTER CITY TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 4 | OVERALL RANK: =4th/20





Manchester City's Riyad Mahrez waves a Palestine flag after winning the Premier League trophy at the Etihad Stadium in May 2021.

The chairman of Manchester City, Khaldoon Al Mubarak, holds several senior positions in the Abu Dhabi government and has joined US President Trump's misleadingly named Board of Peace<sup>139</sup> (BoP), further linking the club to war crimes. The UAE has also transferred arms to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in South Sudan despite the armed group committing war crimes<sup>140</sup>. Manchester City's relationship with the UAE risks bringing the club into disrepute and providing the UAE with a 'sportswashing' opportunity to clean its public image through the club.

Israeli website builder company Wix was founded by a former member of the Israel's notorious military intelligence Unit 8200 which, among much else, monitors the communications of Palestinians living under illegal Israeli occupation<sup>141</sup>. Internal messages from Wix to its employees encouraged them to "show Westernity" and highlight how Israelis, "unlike the Gazans, [we] look and live like Europeans or Americans"<sup>142</sup>. Wix fired an Irish employee from the Dublin branch for comments on social media criticising Israel's attacks on Palestinians in Gaza<sup>143</sup>.

Manchester City's shirt sponsor is PUMA who also sponsor Maccabi Tel Aviv. Many of the supporters of this Israeli football club are viewed as violent racists with links to the Israeli military<sup>144</sup> and have been involved in violent, racist, sexist and pro-genocide

incidents across Europe<sup>145</sup> – which the club's leadership did not distance itself from. In and around a December 2025 match in Germany, Maccabi Tel Aviv fans openly chanted for the "death of Arabs", "May the [Israeli] army f\*\*\* the Arabs," "F\*\*\* Palestine," and "There are no schools in Gaza because all the children are dead." A chant including calls for rape, with lyrics available on the club's website, was also clearly heard. UEFA fined Maccabi Tel Aviv for the incidents.<sup>146</sup> The same chants were made in 2024 in Amsterdam and there were similar incidents in and around Maccabi Tel Aviv matches in Greece and Cyprus. An October 2025 Tel Aviv derby match was also abandoned due to violence involving Maccabi Tel Aviv fans<sup>147</sup>.

As stated in the Parkmill Peer Review<sup>148</sup> considered by the UK parliament, for example, "large-scale disorder" in Amsterdam<sup>149</sup> included visiting Maccabi fans attacking Dutch people not on account of them being rival fans but on perceived religion/ethnicity. Despite this notoriety, PUMA has nonetheless stated: "Maccabi Tel Aviv FC represents excellence, tradition, and loyalty. We are proud to welcome Maccabi into our global family of elite clubs and to become the official kit supplier of Israel's leading football club." Manchester City should not have a business relationship with a company which has a partner closely associated with violent racism.

## MANCHESTER UNITED =4th

**Coca-Cola, Canon Medical** and **Eurobank Direktna** are complicit sponsors of Manchester United.

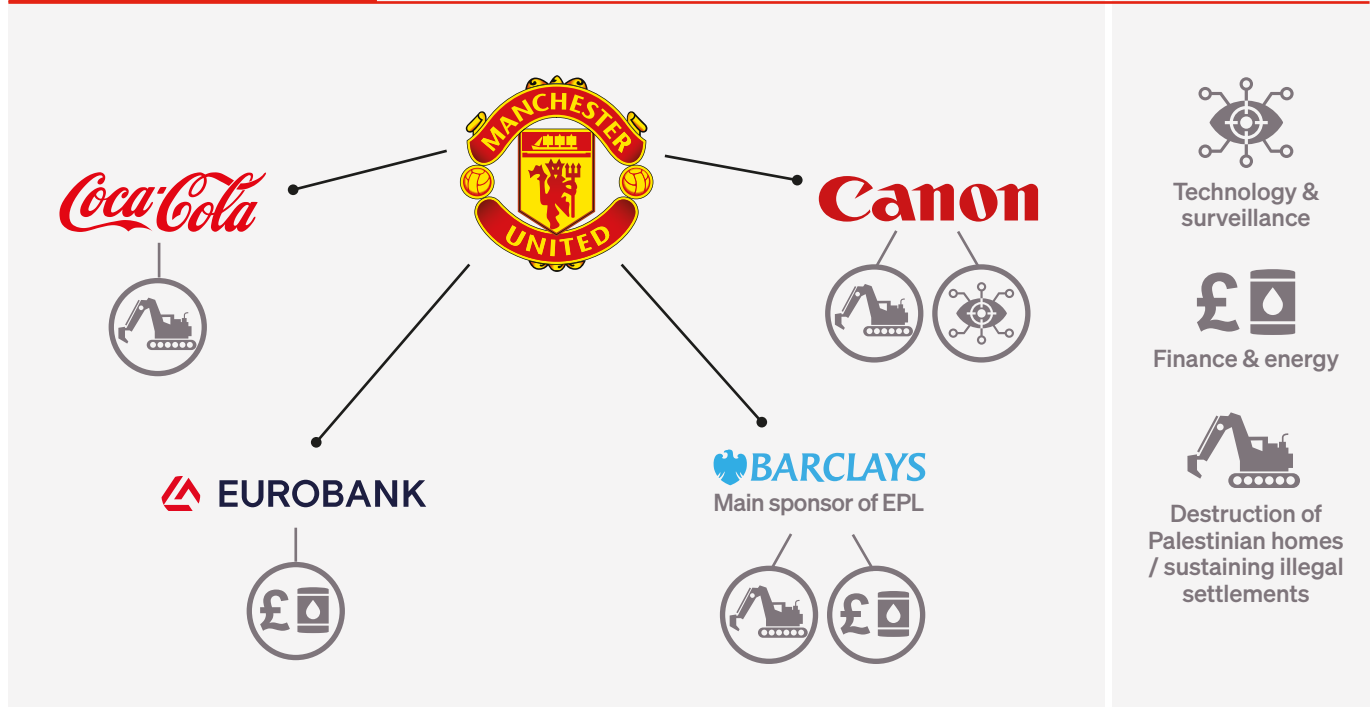
**Coca-Cola** is Manchester United's "Official Soft Drink Partner". Coca-Cola's Israeli licensee is the Central Bottling Company whose subsidiary the *Central Beverage Distribution Company* has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem.

Another subsidiary, *Tabor Winery*, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan.<sup>150</sup> Coca-Cola therefore is involved therefore in illegal occupation, making the occupation more profitable and "normalising" the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which it also benefits from.

Diagnostic imaging company **Canon Medical** is the Official Medical Systems Partner of Manchester United. Japan-based Canon Inc. acquired Israel-based *Briefcam Ltd* in 2018<sup>151</sup>. Briefcam is a video content analysis company which provides surveillance tools to the Israeli occupation authorities in East Jerusalem, contributing to Israel's system of apartheid and its dispossession and repression of Palestinians<sup>152</sup>.

Financial institution **Eurobank Direktna** is the Serbian branch of *Eurobank*, which as of 31 August 2025 had \$43 million invested in shares in 16 companies complicit in Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and genocide including BP<sup>153</sup>, Chevron<sup>154</sup>, Google/Alphabet, Oracle and Rolls Royce<sup>155</sup>. Eurobank Direktna continues to be named on Manchester United's website as its Official Financial Services Affinity Partner for Serbia, but other sources indicate that the bank may no longer exist.

## MANCHESTER UNITED TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 4 | OVERALL RANK: =4th/20



## TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR =2nd

**BP, Coca-Cola, HPE and HSBC** are complicit sponsors of Spurs.

British Petroleum, **BP**, is also the Official EV Charging Partner of Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. BP is the joint largest supplier of crude oil to Israel. Much of the oil is for Israel's military. BP supplied 8% of Israeli crude oil between October 2023 and July 2024. BP is also expanding involvement in the Israeli economy, with exploration licences confirmed in March 2025, allowing BP to explore and potentially exploit with Israel Palestinian maritime resources.<sup>156</sup>

**Coca-Cola's** Israeli licensee is the Central Bottling Company whose subsidiary the *Central Beverage Distribution Company* has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary, *Tabor Winery*, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan.<sup>157</sup> Coca-Cola is therefore involved in illegal occupation, making the occupation more profitable and "normalising" the war crimes of forced displacement, population transfer and apartheid which it also benefits from.

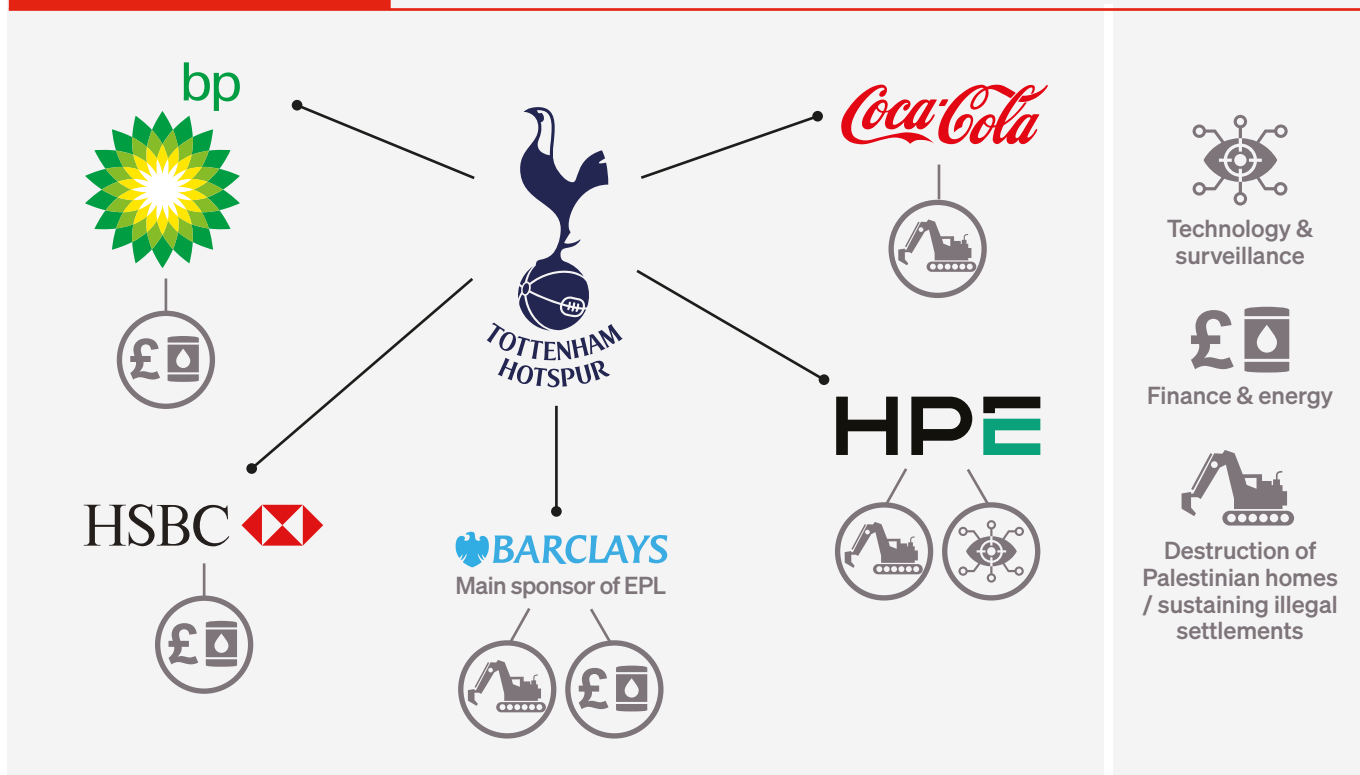
**Hewlett Packard Enterprise Company (HPE)** is Spurs' Official Computer Hardware Supplier. **HPE** is a US-based information technology provider. Since 2017 HPE has been the sole supplier of Itanium servers for the Israel's Population, Immigration and Borders Authority. PIBA's Registry holds data on Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza as well as Palestinian citizens of Israel. The data is systematically used by Israel for the implementation of discriminatory policies against Palestinians – including with regards movement, travel, voting and access to services. HPE also provides services to Israel's military, police and prison services – all of which systematically violate the rights of Palestinians<sup>158</sup>.

Major institutional investors in HPE are *Vanguard* and *BlackRock*, who own in total around 15% of all HPE's shares<sup>159</sup>. (See box on pages 16-17).

Between January 2023 and August 2025 UK-based financial institution **HSBC** held more than \$40 billion in shares and bonds in 67 complicit companies including *BAE, BP*<sup>160</sup>, *Elbit*<sup>161</sup>, *Expedia, Google/Alphabet, IBM, Lockheed Martin, Oracle, Palantir* and *Rolls Royce*. HSBC also provided, as of 31 August 2025, over \$25 billion in loans and underwriting to 31 complicit companies including *Caterpillar, Expedia, Google/Alphabet* and *Rolls Royce*.<sup>162</sup>

## TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

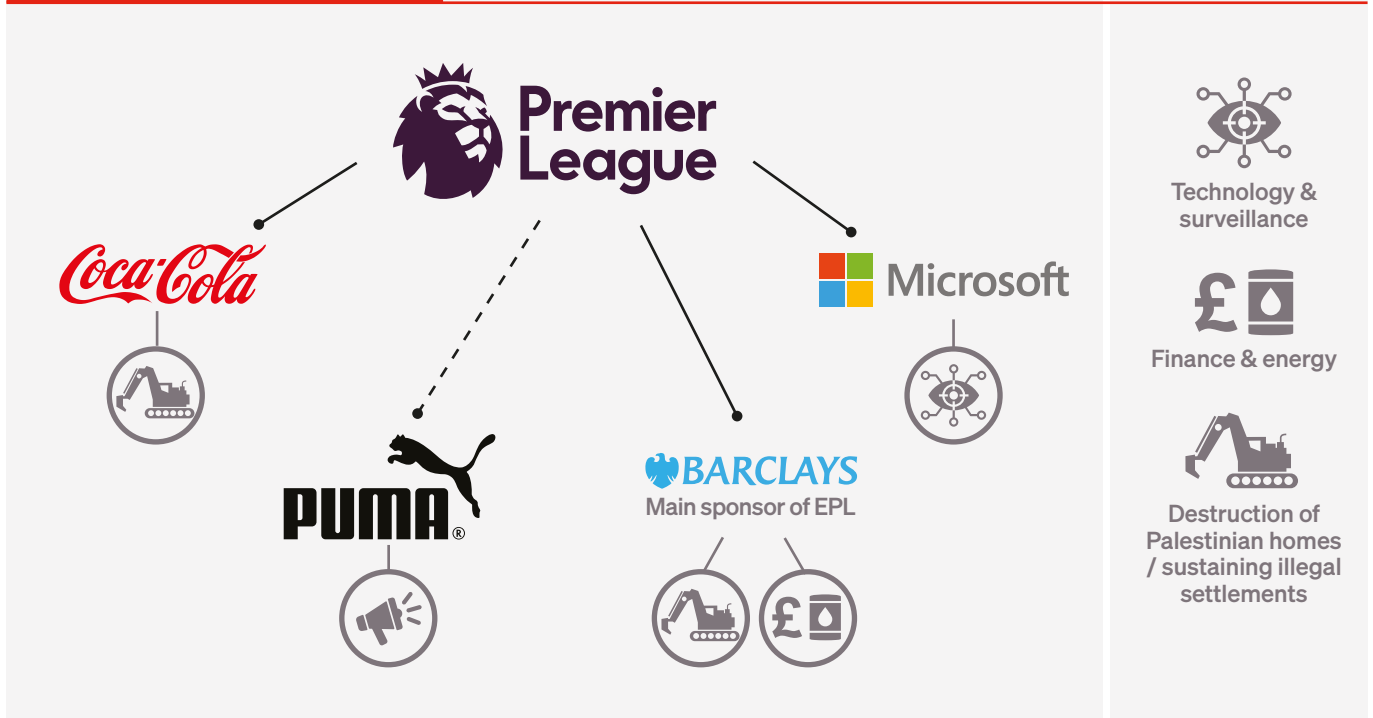
TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 5 | OVERALL RANK: =2nd/20



# Complicit sponsors of the English Premier League and Football Association

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

TOTAL COMPLICIT SPONSORS: 3



The EPL's complicit sponsors are **Barclays Bank**, **Coca-Cola** and **Microsoft** while **PUMA** is at risk of complicity.

UK-based Barclays Bank has a long pedigree as a backer of apartheid – both in South Africa as well by Israel against Palestinians – which calls heavily into question its suitability as a sponsor of a league claiming to be fighting against discrimination.<sup>163</sup> Between January 2023 to August 2025, Barclays provided nearly \$31 billion in loans and underwriting to 35 companies involved in Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid, including *BAE*, *Boeing*, *Caterpillar*, *Google/Alphabet*, *Lockheed Martin* and *Rolls-Royce*<sup>164</sup>. As of 31 August 2025, Barclays also held shares and bonds worth almost \$44 billion in 49 complicit companies including the six named above as well as *Elbit*, *Leonardo*, *Oracle* and *Palantir*.<sup>165</sup> These figures make Barclays Europe's third most complicit financial institution concerning loans and underwriting and seventh most complicit with regards shares and bonds, in terms of financial ties with companies involved in Israel's illegal occupation, apartheid and genocide. In addition, Israel continues to name Barclays as a primary dealer of Israel's sovereign bonds. Israel's treasury bonds are the "main source of finance for the Israeli State budget"

and have therefore "played a critical role in funding the ongoing assault on Gaza"<sup>166</sup>. It is surely not only unethical for the EPL to have Barclays as a key sponsor, but also hypocritical and offensive for the EPL to claim to be tackling racism<sup>167</sup> while having such a close relationship with a long-term financial enabler of apartheid.

**Coca-Cola's** Israeli licensee is the Central Bottling Company whose subsidiary the Central Beverage Distribution Company has a logistics centre and cooling houses in the Atarot Industrial Zone in occupied East Jerusalem. Another subsidiary, Tabor Winery, produces wines from vineyards in illegal settlements in both the occupied West Bank and the occupied Syrian Golan. The EPL therefore has business links with a company involved in illegal occupation of and helping to make that occupation – in which apartheid is being perpetrated and the war crimes of forced displacement and population transfer have been perpetrated – more profitable and "normalised".

**Microsoft** technologies are embedded in Israel's prison service, police, universities and schools – throughout which Palestinians including Palestinian citizens of Israel are discriminated against and abused – including in settlements, all of which are illegal.



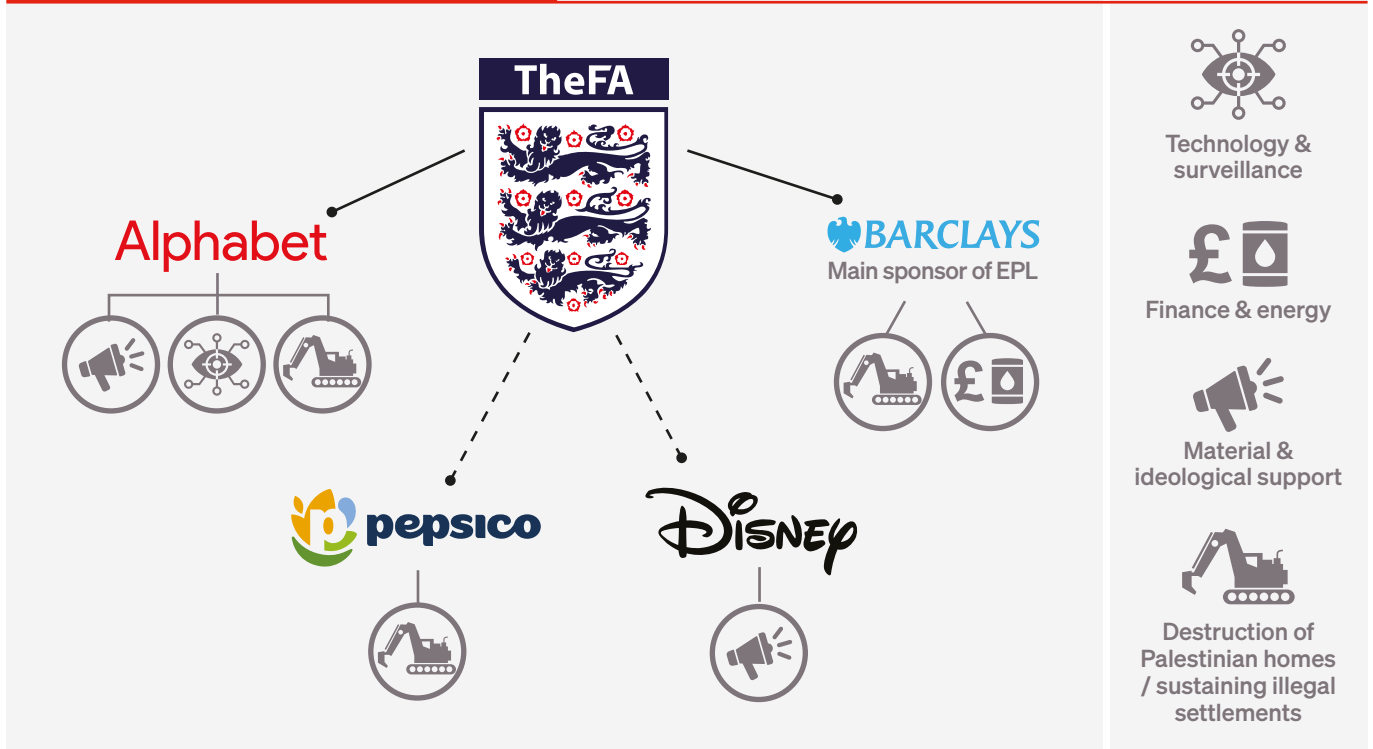
Luton, November 2023. A man waving a Palestine flag invades the pitch during a Luton Town versus Liverpool Premier League match.

Microsoft has also integrated its systems across the Israeli military and grants Israel virtually government-wide access to their cloud and AI technologies, enhancing data processing, decision-making and surveillance and analysis capacities. In October 2023, when the Israeli internal military cloud overloaded, Microsoft, with its Azure platform, and others stepped in with critical cloud and artificial intelligence infrastructure. Their Israel-located servers ensure data sovereignty and a shield from accountability, under favourable contracts offering minimal restrictions or oversight. In July 2024, an Israeli colonel described cloud tech as a weapon in every sense of the word, citing these companies<sup>168</sup>. Microsoft collaborated with Israel's military to develop trainings and other assistance for Israeli soldiers including those guarding illegal settlements. Microsoft has a policy of matching employee donations to organisations promoting Israel's illegal settlements. Microsoft employees who held a vigil for Palestinians killed by Israel were fired<sup>169</sup>. The EPL should not have business links with a company complicit in atrocities.

PUMA also sponsors Maccabi Tel Aviv. Many of the supporters of this Israeli football club are viewed as deeply racist and have been involved in a number of violent, racist, sexist and pro-genocide incidents across Europe— which the club's leadership did not distance itself from. As stated in the Parkmill Peer Review considered by the UK parliament, for example,

“large-scale disorder” in Amsterdam included visiting Maccabi fans attacking Dutch people not on account of them being perceived rival fans but on their perceived religion and ethnicity. Despite this notoriety, a PUMA spokesperson stated: “Maccabi Tel Aviv FC represents excellence, tradition, and loyalty. We are proud to welcome Maccabi into our global family of elite clubs and to become the official kit supplier of Israel's leading football club.” The EPL should not have business links with a company that has a partner closely associated with violent racism.

The EPL and FA bear some responsibility for permitting clubs to be sponsored by companies linked to atrocities and for allowing clubs to have owners linked to atrocities and other breaches of humanitarian and human rights law. These risk bringing the clubs, the EPL and the FA into disrepute. We echo the analysis and calls made by others<sup>170</sup> that companies must not contribute to human rights harms, including by conferring reputational benefits that help cover up or “sportswash” human rights abuses. The EPL and the FA should adopt a rigorous comprehensive human rights policy to help avoid these negative harms and make football more of a force for good. The EPL and FA should also take responsibility for overseeing clubs' practices that may breach staff and supporters' rights to freedom of expression and that may also be discriminatory.



Sponsors of the English FA include complicit **Google Cloud** and **Google Pixel**, while Pepsi and Disney both risk complicity.

**Google Pixel and Google Cloud** are brands of tech company Google which is a subsidiary company of tech giant *Alphabet Inc.* Alphabet has contracts with Israel's government to provide cloud storage and other core tech infrastructure to support data generated by Israel's apartheid, military and population-control systems. In 2021, Israel awarded Alphabet and others a \$1.2 billion contract, for Project Nimbus, largely funded through Israel's Ministry of Defence. Alphabet grants Israel wide access to their cloud and artificial intelligence technologies, enhancing data processing, surveillance, decision making and analysis capacities. Nimbus provides the platform for Israel's military to run lethal and highly problematic artificial intelligence programs such as Lavender, Gospel and Where's Daddy<sup>171</sup> central to the Gaza genocide. Their Israel-located servers provide a shield from accountability for war crimes. In July 2024, an Israeli colonel described cloud tech as a weapon in every sense of the word, citing Google/Alphabet among others<sup>172</sup>. The Israeli military reportedly uses Google Photos' facial recognition features as part of its mass surveillance of Palestinians in Gaza<sup>173</sup>. Google Maps discriminates against Palestinians in multiple ways including by not showing roads used by Palestinians but showing even very small roads which in Israel's apartheid system can only be used by illegal settlers. Google also labels

Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel despite the UN not recognising it as such, and Google does not list Palestine as a state, despite the UN recognising it as once since 2012<sup>174</sup>. Google has repeatedly silenced and retaliated against its workers who have protested its involvement in the Nimbus project<sup>175</sup>.

Pepsi is the owner of *SodaStream*. *SodaStream* may have withdrawn – following sustained international criticism – its principal manufacturing facility in an illegal Israeli settlement in the occupied West Bank but it continues to be involved in serious violations of Palestinians' rights. *SodaStream* relocated operations to the Negev (Naqab) region inside Israel. Multiple independent reports indicate that the current facility is situated adjacent to, and benefits from, the displacement of unrecognised Palestinian Bedouin communities, whose homes have been demolished to make way for industrial expansion, including *SodaStream's* plant. Palestinian workers at *SodaStream* factories have also highlighted exploitative labour practices, lack of religious accommodations and discriminatory treatment. Workers have been fired when raising these concerns. Despite these concerns, *SodaStream* misleadingly advertises itself as promoting "diversity", including via a label with the Israeli flag that reads: "This product is produced by Jews and Arabs working side-by-side in peace and harmony."<sup>176</sup>

Campaign groups<sup>177</sup> have criticised Disney for promoting narratives and hiring actors aligned with Israel's state messaging on genocide.

# 6. Disreputable owners?

Premier League clubs can be linked to atrocities through not only their corporate sponsors but also their owners. The ownerships of **Arsenal, Fulham, Manchester City, Manchester United** and **Newcastle United** risk bringing those clubs into disrepute for their connections to political leaders and organisations involved in atrocities.

Arsenal's billionaire US owner Stan Kroenke donated \$1 million to the first presidential inauguration of Donald Trump, as did Fulham's owner and chairman, Shahid Khan, while Manchester United Director Ed Glazer of the club's majority owning Glazer family donated \$250,000<sup>178</sup>. Under President Trump the USA has provided enormous military and political support for Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid. Trump said he wants to "clean out"<sup>179</sup> the Palestinians from Gaza and would like "tiny" Israel to become larger<sup>180</sup>. Trump has severely attacked the International Criminal Court and human rights organisations for seeking accountability for Israel's war crimes against Palestinians<sup>181</sup>.

Trump's misleadingly named "Board of Peace" (BoP) is supported by indicted war criminal Benjamin Netanyahu. The BoP is a blueprint for ethnic cleansing and illegal occupation, marginalises the Palestinians, sidelines the UN and ignores accountability for the gravest of crimes. The BoP has overseen Israel's continued ongoing genocide and occupation of Gaza and allowed Israel to repeatedly and systematically violate the "ceasefire" there, with impunity. In seven months since the "ceasefire" deal, Israel killed at least 824 people in Gaza, carried out large-scale destruction of homes and other civilian infrastructure and continued to prevent the delivery of humanitarian aid and urgent medical evacuations<sup>182</sup>. UN rights experts<sup>183</sup> condemned the BoP as "an illegal and illegitimate manoeuvre by powerful states" and "fundamentally contrary to basic principles of international law". Amnesty International<sup>184</sup> stated that: "The Board of Peace represents a dangerous assault on international law, and an attempt to create a parallel decision-making structure that bypasses and undermines the United Nations and international justice institutions... [and that] By sidelining accountability and marginalizing Palestinians, this mechanism erases the centrality of victims and their rights, while normalizing the very power dynamics that have enabled Israel's unlawful

occupation, apartheid and its ongoing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza to continue with impunity." Palestinian civil society has roundly condemned the establishment and role of the BoP which stand "in clear violation of international law, entrench Israel's illegal military occupation and denial of Palestinians' inalienable right to self-determination, and provide a diplomatic cover for the commission of war crimes"<sup>185</sup>.

Political leaders involved with Manchester City and Newcastle United have also allied with Trump over the BoP. The chairman of Manchester City, Khaldoon Al Mubarak, holds several senior positions in the Abu Dhabi government and has joined the BoP<sup>186</sup>. The chair of the company owning Newcastle United is the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia who also sits on the BoP.

Under Trump, the US also collaborated with Israel in war crimes against Iran, including crimes of aggression in June 2025 and ongoing from February 2026<sup>187</sup>. During Trump's second presidency the US has also conducted military attacks on Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria, Venezuela and Yemen as well as on multiple boats and their crews in seas in and around the Caribbean and Latin America<sup>188</sup>. Many of the attacks include suspected war crimes and extra judicial executions<sup>189</sup>. Many might expect that an owner, director or major shareholder providing significant financial backing to such a politician would bring the club, and even the EPL and FA, into disrepute, warranting a "fail" of the Owners, Directors and Senior Executives Regime.

Manchester City is owned by the City Football Group with 81% of shares held by Sheikh Mansour, a member of the Abu Dhabi royal family and the deputy prime minister of the UAE<sup>190</sup>. The UAE has a very poor human rights record and close military and economic ties with Israel for which it has been criticised by Palestinian civil society<sup>191</sup>, not least for agreeing to "normalise" relations with Israel without the latter taking any steps to end its illegal occupation. The UAE has also transferred arms to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in South Sudan despite the armed group committing war crimes<sup>192</sup>. Manchester City's relationship with the UAE and President Trump risks bringing the club into disrepute and providing the UAE with a 'sportswashing' opportunity to clean its public image through the club.



Gaza, May 2026: Palestinians living in a tent camp in Khan Younis take part in a football tournament held on a makeshift field between tents organised to boost morale.

In October 2021, the Saudi Arabian Public Investment Fund (PIF) took 80% ownership of Newcastle United FC. Senior executives at Newcastle United along with political leaders in the city as well as the then UK prime minister had pushed for the deal. They and EPL officials stated that PIF was separate to the state of Saudi Arabia, even though the chair of PIF was listed as the Kingdom's Crown Prince<sup>193</sup>. In addition to linking the club to very serious and decades-long patterns of human rights abuses in Saudi Arabia, as well as thousands of civilian deaths<sup>194</sup> in Yemen<sup>195</sup>, this ownership links Newcastle to Israel's atrocities because the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia joined Trump's BoP. The close relationship also provides Saudi Arabia with a 'sportswashing' opportunity to clean its public image through the club.

Many might expect that a club's owner, director or major shareholder providing significant financial backing to such a politician and/or their oppressive projects would bring the club, and even the EPL and FA, into disrepute, warranting a "fail" of the Owners, Directors and Senior Executives (ODSE) Regime.

# 7. Palestinian football versus illegal occupation, apartheid and genocide

Palestinians living under Israeli occupation endure apartheid, fragmentation, severe and widespread harms to their livelihoods. A national football league across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, has long been an impossibility due to Israel's fragmentation of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and extremely tight control of Palestinians' movement between the fragments and as well as within them. For decades, Israel has routinely blocked such travel even for critical medical care or family reunification. The Palestinian football leagues have had to be divided between West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Since October 2023, Israel has doubled down on its already very tight control of the West Bank and currently there are around 1,000 Israeli barriers and checkpoints across it – in addition to risks posed by armed settlers who attack Palestinians daily with impunity. The West Bank football leagues have had to be cancelled due to oppressive illegal occupation and apartheid. The Gaza leagues were ended by genocide. Now only ad hoc matches are played, including by teams of players who have lost limbs during the genocide and previous attacks by Israel.

Israel impedes the playing and development of Palestinian football in other ways. West Bank football pitches are under almost constant threat. The well-known football pitch at Aida Refugee Camp, near Bethlehem, and Umm al-Khair<sup>196</sup> stadium in Masafer Yatta are both threatened with destruction. Israel destroyed the headquarters of Surif Football Club<sup>197</sup>, near Jenin, and used its stadium as a detention and interrogation centre. Among other examples, in November 2024 Israel demolished two football pitches and stadiums in Rafat<sup>198</sup>.

China donated the Palestine Football Association (PFA) enough artificial turf for around 15 full-size pitches, as well as goal-frames and netting, but Israel has blocked the shipment without explanation since November 2025. The PFA stated that: *“This decision, taken despite the completion of all official and technical procedures, represents another episode in a systematic pattern of Israeli violations against*

*Palestinian sport, which the PFA and Palestinian sports institutions have consistently documented and submitted to international bodies. It aims to obstruct the development of sports infrastructure and deny players, particularly youth and children, their right to practice football in safe conditions. The PFA stresses that this measure clearly contradicts FIFA regulations and the Olympic Charter, which guarantee non-discrimination and equal access to sport, and holds the Israeli authorities fully responsible for the consequences of this decision.”*<sup>199</sup>

Israel's attacks on football in Gaza precede 2023. In July 2014, for one example among many, Israel killed four young boys from the Bakr family while they played football on Gaza City's fishing beach<sup>200</sup>. Despite multiple eyewitnesses, including foreign journalists, Israel refused to conduct a proper investigation or hold anyone to account. The Bakr boys were among 566 children in Gaza killed by Israel with impunity over 51 days in 2014. Prior to that, during its aggressions on Gaza in both 2006 during which around 100 children were among around 600 mostly civilian Palestinians killed<sup>201</sup>, and 2012 when more than 30 children were among around 170 mostly civilian Palestinians killed<sup>202</sup>, Israel also bombed the Palestine Stadium in Gaza.

Horrific as Israel's previous, repeated military attacks on Gaza have been, the full-scale assault on Gaza – including the football sector – since October 2023, is unprecedented. The destruction of Gaza's football and sporting infrastructure has been colossal. According to the PFA, Israel has destroyed or significantly damaged 265 sports facilities in Gaza. The destruction includes: 23 major stadiums and fields, 35 indoor halls, 58 club headquarters, 12 FIFA-funded pitches, 17 artificial five-a-side pitches, 23 private five-a-side pitches, as well as 19 sports education facilities, three club swimming pools and 15 basketball, volleyball, and tennis courts<sup>203</sup>. The Palestine Stadium, the Beit Hanoun Municipal Stadium, the Gaza Sports Club Stadium and the Al Hilal Sporting Club Stadium are among those significantly damaged or destroyed.

In the same period, Israel has killed at least 565 members of the PFA, including players, coaches, referees and staff. Among those killed are Sulaiman al-Obaid<sup>204</sup>, former national team player who is one of hundreds of aid-seekers shot dead at a death-trap “aid distribution centre” run by the notorious Gaza Humanitarian Foundation<sup>205</sup>. Promising football player Hanan Wael al-Hawajri of Ahli Girls’ Club<sup>206</sup> was killed in May 2024 when Israel bombed her home in Nuseirat refugee camp. Rafah youth team player Mohammed al-Satri<sup>207</sup> was shot dead while seeking humanitarian aid, in Rafah. Ten children from the professional Al-Mohtarifin Academy in Gaza City<sup>208</sup> and managers Yousef Al-Heela and Hani Al-Msadar from central Gaza were killed.<sup>209</sup> The PFA website has pages of other killings and violations.

In December 2023, as described by sports and politics journalist Karim Zidan: “harrowing footage emerged showing Israeli troops turning Yarmouk stadium into a makeshift internment camp for Palestinian detainees. Dozens of men, women and children were rounded up, stripped down to their underwear, and blindfolded while armed soldiers and tanks encircled the field.

A soldier carrying a baby wrapped in a blanket could be seen at the end of the video. More footage continued to emerge, including photos<sup>210</sup> showing tanks patrolling the field, soldiers posing in front of a group of detained women and children, and blindfolded men and women forced to kneel in front of a goal with the Israeli flag attached to the netting”<sup>211</sup>.

Israeli forces subsequently destroyed the pitch with tanks and bulldozers.

Human rights organisations detailed enforced disappearance and abuse, including threats of rape. Geneva-based Euromed Monitor found that “dozens of women who were taken to Yarmouk Stadium, where they had their veils removed and were searched by soldiers. Many of them also endured explicit abuse, beatings, and harassment. Palestinian males, including children as young as 10 years old and elderly people over the age of 70, were forced to take off all their clothes except their underwear and line up in a humiliating manner in front of the women detained in the same stadium.”<sup>212</sup> The fate and wellbeing of many of those detained at Yarmouk Stadium as well as many thousands of Palestinians detained by Israel is unclear.



Hundreds of Palestinian men, women and children were arbitrarily detained at Yarmouk Stadium in Gaza City from December 2023. The fate of many is still unknown. This image, courtesy of the Palestinian Football Association website, is a still taken from a video that was shared online and since deleted.



© Hashem Zimmo/TheNEWS2

Gaza City, April 2026: Two boys look on as players from Al-Ahli Gaza and Al-Shati Club compete in a match during the Hope League at Palestine Club Stadium surrounded by heavily damaged infrastructure.

Most detainees are held arbitrarily – without legal basis. Israel bans the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from visiting detained Palestinians and severely restricts access to lawyers. Torture and ill-treatment, including to women and children, is widespread and systematic<sup>213</sup>. Reports by the UN as well as Palestinian, Israeli and international human rights organisations catalogue appalling conditions of detention and many forms of physical, psychological and sexual abuse including rape<sup>214</sup>. At least 98 Palestinians have died in Israeli custody since October 2023<sup>215</sup>. Post-mortems indicate that many died from torture, deliberate medical neglect and food deprivation.

While it is inspiring that football continues to be played in occupied Palestine amid the death and destruction, it is sobering that a prominent version is football for amputees<sup>216</sup>. This determination to keep playing the best football possible however bad the circumstances extends to the national team. Despite facing enormous challenges over many years – including the refusal by Israel to permit players from Gaza to travel to play matches and the necessity of hosting “home” games in neighbouring Jordan also on account of Israel’s restrictions – Palestine managed to reach the round of 16 of the 2023 Asia Cup, the quarterfinals of the 2025 Arab Cup and has qualified for the 2027 Asia Cup.

# 8. Genocide and apartheid – but the ref plays on!

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Despite having illegally occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip for almost 60 years, perpetrated apartheid and other war crimes against the Palestinian people and carried out an ongoing genocide since October 2023, there has been no sanctioning of Israel's national football team, the Israeli Football Association (IFA), or Israeli football teams or footballers linked to these atrocities.

This is in stark contrast with measures taken against Russia. On 28 February 2022, just four days after Russia launched its ground invasion of Ukraine, FIFA and UEFA issued a joint statement suspending all Russian national and club teams from competition<sup>217</sup>. The response of FIFA was “not based on rules”, as human rights organisation Fair Square explained, but rather “the political positions of the powerful states of the global north”<sup>218</sup>. The failure to take equivalent actions against Israel's teams rests likewise with the Global North which has continued to pump arms to Israel, to trade with and invest in Israel's illegal settlements, shrug off genocide and apartheid and continued to remain steadfast allies with Israel despite the crossing of so many red lines.

Not only has FIFA *not* taken action against Israel and Israeli football, but FIFA has supported Israel's illegal acts. Human Rights Watch and others wrote to FIFA<sup>219</sup> in 2024 protesting its “de facto recognition of and support for Israeli settlement football clubs operating illegally in occupied Palestinian territory”. Based on earlier HRW research<sup>220</sup>, at least nine clubs have stadiums or offices in settlements which are unequivocally illegal and were built on land stolen from Palestinians. The clubs are exclusively for settlers, provide financial and recreational opportunities for settlers, and are off-limits to Palestinians. The clubs are manifestations of apartheid and other war crimes and yet FIFA allows them to operate and provides money to the IFA which in part goes to support these settlement clubs. On 19 March 2026, FIFA took the appalling decision to not act against Israel's settlement football clubs purportedly based on its understanding that the “legal status of the West Bank remains an unresolved and highly complex matter under public

international law”. That argument is entirely baseless because the occupation is incontrovertibly illegal as determined even by the world's highest inter-statal court, the ICJ. As stated by Amnesty International, “By refusing to take action against clubs based in Israeli settlements, FIFA has failed to enforce its own rules and is blatantly flouting international law. FIFA had a clear opportunity to stand up for Palestinians' rights and international law – with this decision it has shamefully chosen to abandon both.”<sup>221</sup>

This impunity afforded by FIFA to the IFA extends to effectively condoning discrimination and racism, in violation of article 3 of the FIFA Statutes. As detailed by FairSquare, the clearest example is Israeli Premier League team Beitar Jerusalem FC whose supporters, as reported by *The Economist*, “proudly sing about how it is ‘the most racist team’ in Israel.” Chants at matches include “I don't care how many and how they will get killed, Eliminating Arabs makes me thrilled”. Maccabi Tel Aviv has a similar reputation. Its fans have repeatedly sung in praise of killing Palestinian children in Gaza, and of rape, and have violently attacked Muslim and Arab minorities in Amsterdam and elsewhere<sup>222</sup>. The political establishments in the Netherlands and the UK sided with Maccabi Tel Aviv's notorious fans rather than their own nationals. Tolerance and even encouragement of anti-Palestinian racism and discrimination contrasts with FIFA's suspension of apartheid South Africa as early as 1961 – a year after FIFA's 1960 Rome Congress passed a resolution that national associations could not practise racial discrimination. Israel's apartheid against Palestinians has been well-documented for decades, and was reaffirmed by the ICJ in 2024, but Israel's allies block any potential suspension. On 19 March 2026, FIFA's disciplinary committee took a second decision, finding that the IFA had failed to “abide by FIFA's statutory objectives” regarding racist and discriminatory behaviour. The committee said that “The club's [Beitar Jerusalem's] use of slogans such as ‘forever pure’, and the repeated chanting of ethnic slurs such as ‘terrorist’ directed at Arab players, are not isolated incidents but rather form part of a systemic pattern of conduct that offends the basic rules of decent behaviour and brings the sport into disrepute.”



Bilbao, Spain, November 2025: Palestine players hold a banner reading “Stop Genocide” before the friendly football match between The Basque Country and Palestine at San Mamés Stadium.

FIFA issued IFA a fine and ordered it to display a “significant and highly visible banner” at its next three FIFA competition home matches, stating “Football Unites the World – No to Discrimination”.<sup>223</sup> While FIFA’s conclusions are important, including for finding that the IFA “failed to take meaningful action against Beitar Jerusalem” for “persistent and well-documented racist behaviour”, and that the IFA’s failure regarding Beitar Jerusalem “is only a small example of a general failure by the IFA”, the penalties imposed are miniscule in comparison with the gravity of the discrimination, abuse and failings.

Pro-justice organisations have gone as far as submitting a complaint to the International Criminal Court accusing the presidents of FIFA and UEFA of having “aided war crimes and apartheid in Palestinian territory”<sup>224</sup>. FIFA president Gianni Infantino has not only refused to sanction Israel or the IFA but also been a very visible ally of US President Trump who he has referred to as “a close friend”. In a deeply ironic act, in December 2025 Infantino awarded Trump the inaugural “FIFA Peace prize”. In February 2026, a jovial Infantino appeared, incongruously, on Trump’s highly discredited “Board of Peace” (see above).

# 9. Football standing up to Israel's genocide and apartheid

Millions of people in the UK, where the EPL is based, have repeatedly taken to the streets to oppose Israel's war crimes against the Palestinians. Around half of the UK public<sup>225</sup> believes that Israel's actions amount to genocide and most members of the ruling Labour Party<sup>226</sup>. Yet players, clubs, the EPL and the FA and have been mostly silent, expressing almost no sympathy or concern. The pervading silence contrasts with strong support expressed elsewhere, such as by France's Paris Saint Germain (PSG) fans, or those of Celtic in Scotland, Galatasaray in Turkey or Raja Casablanca in Morocco. In Spain, tens of thousands of people watched Catalunya and the Basque team play friendlies against the Palestine team and commemorate events in Gaza<sup>227</sup>. The relative silence in UK football is likely due to fear of smear campaigns or sanctions made against the few who have raised their voices.

Supporters have been prevented from wearing a Palestine t-shirt into EPL grounds, and season-ticket holders banned for the same. Club staff members have been sacked for speaking out. Fifth-tier football club Dagenham and Redbridge dismissed their new Director of Development and Engagement, Dr Salma Mashhour, only three days into her role after some complaints were made regarding old social media posts in which she said people have a right to resist occupation<sup>228</sup>. The club stated that it did not find Dr Mashhour to have promoted hate, terror or discrimination but it stood by the dismissal. Complaints against her were reportedly led by a pro-Israel group.<sup>229</sup>

Dutch player Anwar El Ghazi, who left EPL side Aston Villa and later joined Mainz in Germany, had his contract there terminated after expressing solidarity with oppressed Palestinians. El Ghazi challenged the dismissal in court and won compensation<sup>230</sup>. Censorship and sanctions over compassion with Palestinians affects women's football at all levels of the game. A regional women's cup final between Dulwich Hamlet and Clapton Town of South and East London respectively was terminated by the owners of the Maidstone stadium it was being played in because of flags being held by some supporters of both teams<sup>231</sup>.

Some prominent footballers in the UK are known to have publicly expressed compassion for people suffering genocide and apartheid in Palestine.

These include Katie McCabe, the Republic of Ireland's captain who plays for WSL club Arsenal<sup>232</sup>, as well as Sam Morsy and Hamza Choudhury of EFL sides Bristol City and Leicester City respectively<sup>233</sup>.

Of players in the EPL, in response to a short social media post by UEFA following the death of Suleiman al-Obeid (above), Liverpool striker Mo Salah asked, "Can you tell us how he died, where and why?"<sup>234</sup> Salah's short post raised awareness of the killing of al-Obeid and could be interpreted as exposing UEFA's failure to name the perpetrator, Israel. A number of prominent global football stars including Arsenal's William Saliba and Liverpool's Ibrahima Konate reposted an "All Eyes on Rafah" social media action in 2024 calling for heightened attention on the southernmost Gaza Strip where a million Palestinians were crammed<sup>235</sup>. Rafah was subsequently razed to the ground regardless.

In contrast with the silence of other EPL managers and coaches, Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola stands out for raising his voice about the suffering of Palestinians, especially children. He did so in June 2025 when he received an honorary degree at the University of Manchester<sup>236</sup>; in November 2025 he encouraged people in Spain to attend a Catalunya solidarity match with the Palestine team<sup>237</sup>; and in January 2026 he called for action to support Palestinian children<sup>238</sup>. These sentiments and comments are hardly out of the ordinary, but they are in the world of the EPL.

Sportspeople who stand up against discrimination and oppression are praised. Athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos are seen as heroes for protesting at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics against the poverty and discrimination suffered by black people in the USA<sup>239</sup>. The teams and players who refused to play with or in apartheid South Africa are credited with helping to end its brutal system of racial discrimination and its replacement by democracy, justice and equal rights for all.

History will remember those who raise their voices against Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid. It will also recall those who were silent and those who were complicit.

# 10. Conclusion

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Arguably the world's best and certainly its most watched national football league, the English Premier League, is awash with corporate sponsors complicit in Israel's genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid against the Palestinian people. Sponsors of EPL clubs, the English FA and the EPL itself are exploiting the reputation and popularity of the EPL to position themselves globally as trusted names while enabling unspeakable horrors. The UK government bears responsibility for this permissive environment in which corporations and individuals in the UK can continue to aid and assist the illegal occupation, apartheid and genocide as well as for its own ongoing support for Israel and its war crimes.

The clubs, the FA and EPL must act urgently, even while the UK government chooses to keep supporting and shielding Israel. Premier League clubs, like all corporate entities, have a responsibility to carry out heightened due diligence to ensure that none of their practices, partners or parent/subsidiary companies contribute to the unlawful situation or crimes in the oPt. This responsibility should extend to assessing the roles of their investors and business partners. If Premier League clubs find that they are linked to the harmful activities of investors or business partners, then they must use their leverage to ensure that the partner cease these harmful activities. In line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights<sup>240</sup>, the EPL, FA and EPL clubs should adopt transparent ethical criteria for sponsorships and business relationships as well as a comprehensive human rights policy. This is long overdue.

EPL clubs, the EPL and FA must recognise and address not only their potential structural complicity in Israel's apartheid against Palestinians but also their inadequate action to tackle the racism still pervading football. Clubs must ensure that their monitoring includes anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian prejudice about which there is often less awareness. The right and responsibility to challenge racism sits alongside the right to speak out against all injustices, including genocide, illegal occupation and apartheid. Further still, the EPL, the FA and EPL clubs should explore and support the development and protection of Palestinian football through solidarity initiatives, trainings and exchanges.

The chronic impunity enjoyed by Israel for its war crimes and abuses, including the destruction and repression of Palestinian football must end. The Premier League, the FA and EPL clubs should make it clear that FIFA's refusal to sanction Israel's FA for its teams in illegal settlements and for its failure to meaningfully sanction the Israeli FA for endemic racism and discrimination against Palestinians and Arabs makes a mockery of footballing governance and of international law. The Premier League, the FA and EPL clubs must demand that all forms of racism and discrimination are utterly unacceptable and must be appropriately challenged and sanctioned.

People of conscience inside and outside the football sector will continue to speak out for human rights, freedom and justice for all.

# 11. Recommendations

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## **EPL football clubs as well as the EPL and the FA**

- Ban companies including financial institutions complicit in war crimes and serious human rights violations from sponsoring the EPL, EPL clubs, and the FA, from owning clubs.
- Pending a ban, use their leverage to ensure that any business partner found to be causing or contributing to human rights violations ceases those activities. If the harmful activities continue, then the club, EPL and FA must end the business relationship.
- Adopt clear ethical sponsorship standards and a human rights policy in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Adopt and implement policies on zero tolerance of all forms of racism and discrimination.
- Protect freedom of expression in football.
- Support Palestinian football under occupation and during genocide.
- Use their influence to sanction Israel and the Israel Football Association for their Israeli settlement football clubs, systematic discrimination and racism.

## **Football supporters**

- Monitor the sponsorship and partnership partners of clubs and encourage the clubs to drop ones linked to atrocities and adopt or continue with ethical ones.
- Help monitor all forms of racism and discrimination, including anti-Arab, anti-Muslim and anti-Palestinian prejudice about which there is often less awareness and fewer resources available to combat them, and report any incidents to officials at the clubs, anti-racism bodies and the police.
- Refrain from consuming or using products from companies linked to atrocities including genocide and apartheid.

## **All other national and international women and men's football and sports leagues and clubs**

- Urgently carry out audits of sponsors and other business partners to assess if they are complicit in atrocities, and cease any relationships with partners found to be complicit.

## **The UK government**

- Work with the EPL, FA, clubs and other stakeholders to end as quickly as possible sponsorship and advertising by companies involved in atrocities.
- Immediately address its own failure to implement the ICJ's July 2024 Advisory Opinion and ensure that no entity in the UK, whether state or private, aids or assists Israel's illegal occupation and apartheid.
- Urgently rectify its own failures to uphold international law including the Genocide Convention and the provisional measures demanded by the ICJ since January 2024 to prevent and punish genocide by immediately using all economic and diplomatic leverage to bring Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people in Gaza to a halt and hold the perpetrators to account.
- Advise the private sector that companies including financial institutions will lose access to UK markets and finance if they are involved in atrocities.
- Inform and remind senior corporate executives as well as senior government officials that they carry individual criminal responsibility for breaking the law if they have aided Israel's atrocities.

## **Corporate sponsors, including financial institutions, named in this report**

- Cease immediately activities causing or contributing to human rights violations against the Palestinians and ensure that victims may seek redress and reparations.

# Complicit companies at a glance

At least 15 complicit companies sponsor EPL clubs:

## Alphabet

**Google/Alphabet** provides Israel with tech infrastructure which facilitates its military and apartheid systems against Palestinians. Google labels Jerusalem as Israel's capital despite the UN not recognising it as such and does not list Palestine as a state despite the UN recognising it as one since 2012.



**AXA** has invested billions of pounds in at least 51 complicit businesses facilitating Israel's atrocities.



**BP** supplies crude oil for Israel's military. With Israel, BP is exploring offshore energy reserves, potentially exploiting Palestinian resources.

## Canon

**Canon** owns *Briefcam Ltd* which provides surveillance tools for Israel to repress and discriminate against Palestinians under its illegal occupation.



In Israel, **Carlsberg** beer is manufactured by *Coca-Cola Israel* which has factories and subsidiaries in illegal settlements.



**Cisco** provides tech and surveillance equipment to the Israel's military and police and to illegal settlements.

## Coca-Cola

**Coca-Cola's** Israeli licensee has factories and subsidiaries in illegal settlements.



**Eurobank** has invested millions in shares of at least 16 companies complicit in Israel's atrocities.

## evelyn PARTNERS

**Evelyn Partners** has invested more than £1billion in shares of at least 31 companies complicit in Israel's atrocities.

## Expedia

**Hotels.com** and parent company **Expedia** offer rentals in illegal settlements.

## HPE

**HPE** supplies servers and other services to Israel which facilitate its apartheid and other abusive policies against Palestinians.

## HSBC

**HSBC** has invested billions in at least 67 companies complicit in Israel's atrocities.

## Meta

Tech giant Meta, which owns WhatsApp and Facebook, has advertised property sales in illegal Israeli settlements and fundraising for Israeli military units in Gaza. Meta has cooperated closely with Israel's military to remove Palestinian and pro-Palestinian social media content.

## SONY

**Sony** electronics and surveillance equipment has contributed to Israel's illegal settlement industry, its illegal Gaza blockade wall and illegal West Bank separation wall.



**Standard Chartered** has provided billions to at least 24 companies complicit in Israel's atrocities.

## ORACLE

**Oracle** facilitated Israel's ability to base its military operations on IT systems. Oracle donated equipment to Israeli army units in the Gaza Strip during the genocide.

## An additional nine companies sponsoring EPL clubs risk complicity in Israel's atrocities:



Major institutional investors in **American Express** are Vanguard and BlackRock who have channelled billions of pounds into arms and other companies involved in Israel's atrocities.



Senior executives of **Deel** have given supplies to Israel's armed forces during the genocide.



The owners of **Emirates** are involved with Israel's military and surveillance sectors and support Trump and Netanyahu's illegal plans.



The owners of **Etihad** are involved with Israel's military and surveillance sectors and support Trump and Netanyahu's illegal plans.



Artificial intelligence tech company **IFS** works with arms companies that have partnered with Israeli arms companies enabling Israel's atrocities.



**Pepsi** owns SodaStream which has reportedly benefitted from the forced displacement of Palestinian communities and discriminated against Palestinian workers.



**PUMA** partners Maccabi Tel Aviv football club which is closely associated with violent racism.



Executives at **WIX** have worked for Israeli military intelligence, promoted racist narratives and fired staff who complained about Israel's atrocities.



**X** has transmitted alarming amounts of hate speech, incitement to violence, and dehumanisation of Palestinians.

### Complicit sponsors of the EPL



**Barclays Bank** backed apartheid in South Africa and continues to do so with Israel's apartheid against Palestinians, including by providing billions to at least 49 complicit companies.



**Coca-Cola's** Israeli licensee has factories and subsidiaries in illegal settlements.



**Microsoft** technologies support Israel's military and are embedded in Israel's prison service, police, universities and schools – throughout which Palestinians including Palestinian citizens of Israel are subjected to discrimination and abuse.

#### At risk of complicity:



**PUMA** partners Maccabi Tel Aviv football club which is closely associated with violent racism.

### Complicit sponsors of the English Football Association



**Google/Alphabet** provides Israel with tech infrastructure which facilitates its military and apartheid systems against Palestinians. Google labels Jerusalem as Israel's capital despite the UN not recognising it as such and does not list Palestine as a state despite the UN recognising it as one since 2012.

#### At risk of complicity:



**Pepsi** owns SodaStream which has reportedly benefitted from the forced displacement of Palestinian communities and discriminated against Palestinian workers.



**Disney** reportedly promotes narratives and actors aligned with Israel's state messaging on genocide.

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