

PRESS SUMMARY**15 JUNE 2026****Crown Court at Woolwich: Mr Justice Johnson****THE KING****-and-**

- (1) CHARLOTTE HEAD**
- (2) SAMUEL CORNER**
- (3) LEONA KAMIO**
- (4) FATEMA ZAINAB RAJWANI**

Note: *This summary is provided to assist in understanding the Court's decision. It does not form part of the reasons for the decision. The full judgment of the Court is the only authoritative document. Judgments are public documents and are available at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments>*

[References in square brackets are to paragraphs in the judgment of the Court].

The issue

The issue for the court to decide was whether each defendant's offence of criminal damage had a "terrorist connection" within the meaning of section 69 of the Sentencing Act 2020.

The legal test

The court was required to find a "terrorist connection" if, but only, if, a defendant's offence of criminal damage:

- (1) Involved serious damage to property.
- (2) Was designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public.
- (3) Was for the purpose of advancing a political or ideological cause **[19]**.

The prosecution argued that this test was satisfied. The defence argued that it was not. The defence also argued that it would be a breach of the Human Rights Act 1998 to find a terrorist connection.

Decision

The Court found, in each case, that there was a terrorist connection.

Reasons for decision

Correspondence and submissions from third parties: The court declined to read correspondence and submissions from third parties save to the limited extent that they were adopted and put before the court by a party to the case [3 – 5].

Previous ruling: At an early pre-trial hearing the prosecution applied for, and the court made, a terrorist connection ruling for the purpose of section 29(1C) of the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996. That had certain procedural consequences [6]. The ruling under the 1996 Act does not have any effect for the purpose of sentencing. The test that must now be applied is different [7]. There was a statutory reporting restriction in respect of the decision under the 1996 Act which was extended at the defendants' request to avoid a substantial risk of prejudice. That reporting restriction ceased to operate after the defendants' trial [8 – 9].

Burden and standard of proof, fairness and separate consideration: The court should only find a terrorist connection if it is sure that the statutory test is satisfied. There is no unfairness in applying the test. The defendants knew of the issue from March 2025, gave evidence as to their motivation at trial (and particularly in the first trial), and could have called further evidence at the sentencing hearing. That test must be considered separately in respect of each defendant [27 – 29].

Serious damage to property: Video and photographic evidence showed the extent of the damage caused, the means by which the damage was caused, and the time period of more than 20 minutes over which the damage was caused. It extended to the damage of very many individual items of technological equipment, as well as a disabled toilet. In many instances the damage caused was not trivial or minor, but rather substantial to the point of destruction. The evidence showed that well over £1m was paid out by insurers in respect of the damage. Serious damage to property had been caused [30 - 37].

Designed to influence the government or intimidate a section of the public: The court rejected the prosecution submission that the defendants' offence was designed to influence the Israeli government [38].

However, the court accepted the prosecution submission that the defendants' offence was designed to influence the United Kingdom government and to intimidate a section of the public.

Palestine Action's overarching aim was to shut down Elbit Systems, and to end what it regarded as over a century of "British complicity" in an apartheid occupation of Palestine, and, more recently, British complicity in what it regarded as Israeli war crimes in Gaza. The strategy to achieve that aim was to carry out actions against Elbit Systems and businesses linked to it, in order to intimidate it into ceasing operations or to cause the Government to prevent it from operating [41].

Each of the defendants carried out an offence of criminal damage with the aim of shutting down Elbit and ending British complicity in Israeli war crimes. They each did so as part of the strategy of carrying out actions against Elbit Systems and businesses linked to it, in order to intimidate it into ceasing operations or to cause the Government to prevent it from operating **[44 - 49]**.

Political or ideological cause: The offences of criminal damage were intended to advance each defendant's belief that Israel's approach to Palestine generally, and its military activities in Gaza in particular, were wrong, that the United Kingdom government should not be permitting the export of weapons to Israel, and that it was legitimate to damage the property of others in the pursuit of that cause. Those amount to political or ideological causes **[50]**.

Human Rights Act 1998: The imposition of a terrorist connection ruling is required by section 69 of the Sentencing Act 2020. Section 6(1) of the Human Rights Act 1998 does not apply because, under section 6(2), the Court could not have acted differently where the finding was mandated by primary legislation **[58]**. Even if section 6(1) applied, section 69 of the 2020 Act is not incompatible with the rights under articles 7, 10 and 11 (or with article 14 read with articles 6, 10 and 11) of the European Convention of Human Rights **[62 - 68]**.

Abuse of process: There is no evidence that the decision of the Crown Prosecution Service not to charge the defendants with any offence under terrorism legislation was made for an improper purpose, or on any other basis than an application of the Code for Crown Prosecutors **[69]**.

Conscientious objection: This is not the type of case of civil disobedience on conscientious grounds where the courts treat the offender's motivation as a mitigating factor. Such cases involve, on the part of the offender, restraint and acceptance of the consequences. Those features are absent in this case **[70 - 72]**.