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cc. British judges
Stephen Parkinson, DPP

Dear Attorney General

***Free Political Prisoners
Sack Lord Walney
Uphold International Law***

We are writing to you concerning the serious violations of the UK's international law obligations occurring under your watch. Judging by their political statements, your predecessors viewed international law as inferior law - to be relegated to the footnotes of the judgements of British courts on the basis of the sovereignty of Parliament.

We urge you to acknowledge a political reality: in a globalised world the rule of law will rapidly unravel unless grounded in international law and respect for our global family.

Britain, like other countries, has a diverse population. British citizens have family and friends in all corners of the world. How do you expect any one of us to feel bound to a social contract that legitimises horror upon our brothers and sisters?

The first principle of international law is the duty to prevent harm to the territory of other states. Yet City of London's financiers, insurers and [lawyers](#) continue to profiteer from fossil fuel exploration and development they know will turn vast regions of the world into death-traps - for humans and other forms of life.

And we can see with our own eyes and from the judgements of the International Court of Justice, that Israel's unremitting violence against the Palestinian population violates basic principles of international law.

On 17 October 2023, you signed a letter to the Financial Times which said:

“In these early days when emotions are so understandably raw, many might be reluctant to remind Israel of its international law obligations, considering to do so

insensitive or inappropriate. However, we disagree. In these times of pain and terror the notion that there are laws that we must all live by is challenging but essential. Jewish history teaches us that we cannot give up on them.”

Yet those who take your words seriously and refuse to be bystanders, taking nonviolent direct action to uphold international law and to prevent mass loss of life, are persecuted and jailed in increasing numbers on your watch. Either following sham trials, in which they are banned from explaining to the jury why they took action, or on remand, without any trial at all. Some have been jailed for four or five years.

There has been a dramatic upsurge in jail sentences, and the length of them, since the report of Lord Walney in May of this year. Lord Walney is presented to the public as ‘the Government’s independent adviser on political violence and disruption’ but is in reality a lobbyist for the oil and arms industries. This is corruption of democracy and the rule of law.

Michel Forst, the UN Special Rapporteur, has stated publicly, in forceful terms, that what’s happening violates the UK’s legal obligations under Article 3(8) of the Aarhus Convention. As a Minister you have a duty to uphold international law, most particularly as the Attorney General, the senior legal adviser to the Government.

Numerous requests have been made to you for a meeting on these matters, from tens of thousands of concerned citizens. Yet while your office has met with the arms industry to discuss the ‘issue’ of jury acquittals of those taking action to expose them, you have refused our modest and reasonable request for a meeting that is recorded and made transparent to the public. We know we cannot offer you the inducements used by the arms and oil industries to secure meetings. All we have is the power of collective action and our basic democratic rights.

Today we begin our direct action campaign, *#FreePoliticalPrisoners #SackLordWalney* outside Southwark Crown Court from 12.30pm. It will be a lawful and peaceful assembly in accordance with Article 10 and 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the principles established by the Supreme Court in the case of Ziegler.

We will then escalate the campaign as necessary, until you agree to meet us.

Yours sincerely,

Defend Our Juries.