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## Starmer urges Israel to abandon Gaza City Takeover Plan



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LONDON, Aug. 8 — UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer has condemned Israel’s plan to seize control of Gaza City, warning it would only bring “more bloodshed” and worsen the humanitarian crisis.

The move, approved overnight by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s security cabinet, is part of a wider strategy to defeat Hamas. Israel’s military already controls about three-quarters of Gaza, but Gaza City remains the largest population centre in the enclave.

Starmer urged Israel to step back from escalation, stressing the need for a ceasefire, a surge in humanitarian aid, the release of all hostages, and a negotiated solution that excludes Hamas from Gaza's future. "This action will do nothing to end the conflict or secure hostages' freedom," he said.

The plan has drawn criticism across UK politics. Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey called it "utterly abhorrent" and demanded an immediate halt to UK arms sales to Israel, along with sanctions against Netanyahu and his cabinet. The SNP and Green Party echoed these calls, pressing for Parliament to be recalled and for stronger measures to stop what they describe as "genocide" and "war crimes."

Israel rejects allegations of genocide, saying its goal is to dismantle Hamas while allowing humanitarian aid to civilians outside combat zones.

The UN has warned that a full takeover could have "catastrophic consequences" for both Palestinian civilians and Israeli hostages.

The UK's stance on Gaza has also created friction with Washington. Last week, London said it would recognise a Palestinian state in September unless Israel agrees to a ceasefire and moves toward a two-state solution — a step opposed by the US and Israel.

US Vice President JD Vance, visiting the UK, acknowledged policy differences but stressed both

nations share the goal of easing Gaza's humanitarian crisis.