

UK's move to bar some arms from Israel is symbolic, but that matters: Analysts

"It marks a policy change from the previous government and says a lot about the relations of the new government with the current government of Israel," **INSS analyst Tammy Caner** told Breaking Defense.

By Seth J. Frantzman / September 03, 2024

JERUSALEM — The United Kingdom's decision to suspend the export of more than two dozen defense articles to Israel is unlikely to affect its immediate war effort, but is symbolically important and could have further ramifications, analysts here told Breaking Defense.

[...]

Richard Pater, the director of the Britain Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM), told Breaking Defense that the partial embargo was not totally unexpected, as there were "rumors that some form of re-assessment was coming down the track." **Tammy Caner, a researcher in the Law and National Security program at the Institute for National Security Studies (INSS)**, said it came in response to "pressure from the pro-Palestine elements within the [UK] Labour party, who wanted a total arms embargo."

[...]

The UK has suspended arms shipments before. In 1969 it stopped sending Chieftain tanks to Israel, leading Jerusalem to indigineously develop the Merkava line of tanks, reserve Col. Hanan Shai of the Misgav Institute for National Security and Zionist Strategy pointed out. Shai points out that in the past Israel also found it could buy items it needed in other places. **Caner** says that the decision's main impact, therefor, is diplomatic.

[...]

Still, **Caner**, **Pater** and **Shai** said they see wider ramifications of the decision. **Shai** argued that the suspension can be seen as a larger break with the values that have historically tied Israel to the UK and US.

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