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## *Secrecy shrouds British military actions in Lebanon*

The UK, perpetually dissatisfied with its status as a former imperial power, seeks to play an oversized role in Israel's protection by setting its military and intel sights on Lebanon, Gaza, and Yemen today.



Photo Credit: The Cradle

On 8 October, veteran British reporter Robert Peston published a [remarkable post](#) on the social media platform X. Citing insider information from “government and intelligence sources,” Peston asserted that the Palestinian resistance operation Al-Aqsa Flood would inevitably evolve into a full-blown regional war, one that will be “as destabilizing to global security as Putin’s attack on Ukraine.” The journalist forewarned:

“We are in the early stages of a conflict with ramifications for much of the world.”

What makes this revelation even more astonishing is the speed at which British intelligence gained certainty about imminent upheaval in West Asia, just over 24 hours after the unprecedented strike by Palestinian freedom fighters on Israel.

The urgency to prepare western audiences for the impending crisis hints at a deeper narrative — that London may have had a hand in igniting conflict across the region, a macabre plan that has been unfolding ever since.

### **Covert military alliances: SAS in Gaza**

It goes without saying that Britain's involvement in Israel's genocidal assault in Gaza is shrouded in intense secrecy. In [December 2020](#), London and Tel Aviv signed a military cooperation agreement described by Ministry of Defense officials as an “important piece of defense diplomacy” that “strengthens” military ties between the two countries, while providing “a mechanism for planning our joint activity.”

The contents of this agreement, however, remain hidden not only from ordinary British citizens but also from elected lawmakers.

Speculation arises regarding whether the agreement obligates Britain to defend Israel in the event of an attack, potentially explaining the visible involvement of the notorious SAS in the assault by the occupation army on Palestinians.

Mainstream media [reports](#) in late October hinted at the elite squadron being “on standby” at British military and intelligence bases in neighboring Cyprus, preparing to conduct daring hostage rescue operations in Gaza.

[Subsequent articles](#) suggested Britain's special operations soldiers were “training in Lebanon to rescue Britons” in West Asia, should they get caught up in the war in Gaza, or “be taken hostage” by the Lebanese resistance, Hezbollah, or its allies.

A senior British Army official boasted that these forces had “built up a very close relationship” with their counterparts in Beirut, which “provides an insight and influence on Lebanese decision-making and seeing things from the other side of the northern border, which clearly concerns Israel.”

The secrecy surrounding these activities prompted Britain's Defense and Security Media Advisory (DSMA) Committee to issue [D-notices](#) to British news outlets, cautioning against disclosing sensitive information about SAS operations in West Asia.

[True to form](#), there has been no further reporting on the SAS interest in Gaza by mainstream British media. Yet, the DSMA's reference to “security, intelligence and counter-terrorist operations” points to a very different purpose to their presence in the region than mere hostage rescue.

Independent investigations by [Declassified UK](#) bolster this suspicion, revealing 33 military transport flights traveling to Tel Aviv from the same British bases in Cyprus where SAS operatives are stationed.

These flights, including daily ones in the fortnight following Israel's attack on Gaza, are no mere coincidence. As recently as 12 December, the independent media outlet [revealed](#) how Britain secretly deployed 500 additional troops to its Cyprus bases in response to Operation Al-Aqsa Flood.

This information was disclosed to a parliamentarian by a UK government minister. It was also revealed that Britain dispatched additional troops to the occupation state and its neighbors Egypt and Lebanon, justified only by vague references to “operational security reasons.”

### **Unrestricted access to Lebanon?**

On 21 November, [The Cradle](#) brought to light a covert initiative by Britain to secure unfettered access to Lebanese territory for its armed forces.

A leaked document on the proposals offered neither a rationale for London doing so, nor specified the specific mission British Army soldiers would be fulfilling in Beirut – deviating from customary transparency in such memoranda of understanding.

Had the memorandum been approved, it would have granted “all [British] military personnel” unprecedented access to Lebanon's ground, air and sea territory, bypassing the need for “prior diplomatic authorization” for “emergency missions.”

The nature of those missions was not specified. Essentially, British soldiers would have been permitted to travel in uniform with their weapons visible anywhere in Lebanon, while enjoying immunity from arrest or prosecution for committing any crime.

These audacious stipulations draw unsettling parallels with the NATO-drafted [Rambouillet Agreement](#) presented to Yugoslavia in 1999, where refusal became a pretext for a US-led military onslaught.

At the time, a senior State Department official [gleefully admitted](#) to “deliberately [setting] the bar higher” than could possibly be accepted by Yugoslavia's government.

Yet, London had good cause to believe that Beirut would capitulate to its exorbitant demands this time round. As extensively documented by [The Cradle](#), British intelligence has over many years run multiple [covert operations](#) to infiltrate Lebanese military, [security](#) and intelligence agencies at the highest levels, while inserting its operatives and allies into key state ministries.

Each of these operations [was backed](#) by a memorandum of understanding, the precise terms of which have never been publicly disclosed by either side.

Having [designated](#) Hezbollah, a prominent Lebanese political party, as a proscribed terrorist group, Britain maintains a watchful eye on the resistance group's military wing from a listening post on [Mount Olympus](#) in Cyprus. This strategic oversight is justified by the anticipation of potential involvement in a conflict alongside Iran if a "war of annihilation" unfolds in Gaza.

### **East of Suez**

That "war of annihilation" is now well underway. The exposed UK-Lebanon memorandum, if enacted, could have positioned British troops strategically in the Levantine state, potentially escalating tensions to the brink of an all-out war.

While the reasons for the memorandum's non-enactment remain unclear, a new theater of conflict in the [Red Sea](#) may be diverting attention. The US, joined by allies including Britain, has initiated a "maritime security mission" in response to [operations](#) by Yemen's Ansarallah-aligned armed forces against Israel-bound commercial vessels, leading to a [significant disruption](#) in vital shipping lanes.

The international coalition, despite its show of force, faces challenges, with Sanaa showing no signs of backing down. The operational costs of intercepting low-cost attack drones are [raising concerns](#) among senior Pentagon officials about the effectiveness of the mission.

For Britain, the US-led initiative aligns with its strategic goals outlined in the [March 2021](#) 'integrated defense review,' a blueprint for ruling the waves again, ensuring "freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Aden."

This renewed naval focus serves as a stark departure from Britain's 1967 [withdrawal from the region](#), known as 'East of Suez' – a move considered symbolic in the decline of the British Empire.

As *The Cradle* exposed in April, British intelligence ran secret [psychological warfare operations](#) to coerce Yemenis into accepting an iniquitous UN peace plan to end Saudi Arabia's devastating air war against Sanaa.

With Ansarallah's resilience against neocolonial pressures, coupled with the failure of such psychological tactics, the stage is set for a conflict with potentially far-reaching consequences – an unsettling prospect foreshadowed by Robert Peston's intelligence sources on 8 October.

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