

# [***Prince William Branded 'Meddlesome' Over Gaza Remarks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCR-GTY1-JBR6-94FW-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Prince William earned a backlash after speaking out on Gaza casualties but one key figure backed his comments.

**Body**

Prince William set himself at odds with [*Benjamin Netanyahu*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/benjamin-netanyahu?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s Israeli government with outspoken comments on Gaza—and earned criticism from the right of British ***politics***.

The Prince of Wales ripped up the royal impartiality rule book to call for more aid to get into the territory, an end to fighting as soon as possible and a focus on a permanent peace.

His bold statement cast a very different tone to Netanyahu's own past comments about dismantling Hamas and full peace only after Israel can "deradicalize the whole of Palestinian society."

Peter Hunt, a former [*BBC*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/bbc?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) royal correspondent, compared William's intervention to the years in which [*King Charles III*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/king-charles-iii?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), then still a prince, was known for meddling in government business via letters he would write in spidery handwriting. They came to be known as the "black spider" letters.

Hunt wrote: "Meddlesome prince 2.0?"

William landed himself on the front pages of four national newspapers but did earn supportive comments from many royal commentators and, significantly, the chief rabbi. The bigger signs of disquiet came from Westminster.

**What the Papers Say**

The *Daily Mail* ran the front page headline, "William: Too Many Have Died in Gaza Conflict," alongside the subhead: "Prince risks controversy with impassioned and unprecedented intervention, and says 'like others I want an end to the fighting.'"

Richard Kay, a senior writer for the newspaper and former friend of [*Princess Diana*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/princess-diana?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), wrote: "In a few short words, presented on an arresting black background, William offered a view on the conflict that strayed perilously close to entering a political and diplomatic minefield."

"Friends say that, like so many of us, William has not been immune to the terrible pictures and videos emerging from Gaza since Israel began its operation to eradicate Hamas," he continued.

"I am told he also wants to move away from the mere platitudes that are the typical stuff of royal statements. If this is so, we are heading for dangerous uncharted waters. With the King incapacitated, what William does and says are necessarily subject to additional scrutiny."

Meanwhile, the *Daily Telegraph*'s front page carried the subhead: "Prince's intervention, co-ordinated with No 10, threatens rift with Israel."

While the press raised some concerns, there was high profile support from the Chief Rabbi, Sir Ephraim Mirvis.

"Since his visit to the region in 2018," Mirvis said. "The Prince of Wales has shown a deep concern for the well-being of all those affected by the conflict in the Middle East and his words of compassion today, which I welcome, are yet further evidence of this."

**What the Politicians Say**

Downing Street is believed to have seen [*Prince William*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/prince-william?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s statement in advance and approved it, however, there was needless to say still disquiet from some quarters, with off the record briefings filtering into the papers.

Andrew Percy, a Conservative MP and vice-chairman of the all-party parliamentary group on antisemitism, was one of those willing to go on the record.

He said: "The underlying principle of our constitutional monarchy is that members of the royal family do not engage in contentious political issues of the day on which there are divergent and strongly-held beliefs in this country. Members of the royal family would do well to remember that."

Meanwhile, [*Nigel Farage*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/nigel-farage?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), former leader of UKIP and now a GB News presenter, wrote on Twitter: "I'm not sure that our future King should be doing this. He should stick to the BAFTAs."

**What the Israeli Defense Forces Say**

An Israel Defense Forces statement on Tuesday said: "Israelis of course want to see an end to the fighting as soon as possible and that will be possible once the 134 hostages are released and once the Hamas terror army threatening to repeat the October 7 atrocities is dismantled.

"We appreciate the Prince of Wales' call for Hamas to free the hostages. We also recall with gratitude his statement from October 11 condemning Hamas' terror attacks and reaffirming Israel's right of self defense against them."

The *Daily Telegraph* reported that the Israeli government was caught off guard by William's comments and felt they were naive but swerved a diplomatic argument with a future British king.

**What Prince William Said**

"I remain deeply concerned about the terrible human cost of the conflict in the Middle East since the [*Hamas*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/hamas?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) terrorist attack on 7 October," the prince's statement read. "Too many have been killed.

"I, like so many others, want to see an end to the fighting as soon as possible. There is a desperate need for increased humanitarian support to Gaza. It's critical that aid gets in and the hostages are released.

"Sometimes it is only when faced with the sheer scale of human suffering that the importance of permanent peace is brought home.

"Even in the darkest hour, we must not succumb to the counsel of despair. I continue to cling to the hope that a brighter future can be found and I refuse to give up on that."

*Jack Royston is* Newsweek*'s chief royal correspondent based in London. You can find him on X, formerly* [*Twitter*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/twitter?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)*, at* [*@jack\_royston*](https://twitter.com/Jack_Royston) *and read his stories on* Newsweek*'s* [*The Royals Facebook page.*](https://www.facebook.com/NewsweekRoyals)

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[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2351953/prince-william-benjamin-netanyahu.jpg)

**Graphic**

Prince William and Benjamin Netanyahu

Kin Cheung - WPA Pool/Getty Images

Prince William visits the British Red Cross, in London, England, on February 20, 2024, to learn about the relief effort in Gaza. Prince William's statement on the conflict struck a very different tone to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

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