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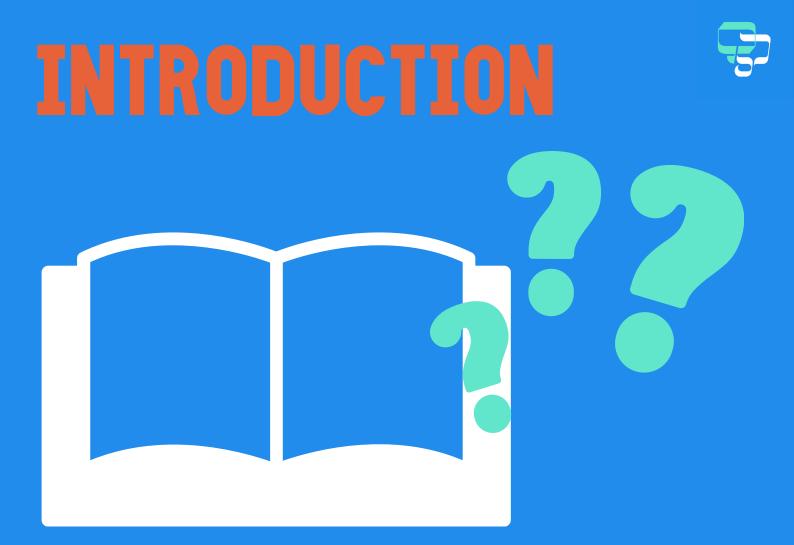
UN & UK POSITIONS ON

Palestine-Islael



A guide to UN & UK positions on Israel-Palestine

www.solutionsnotsides.co.uk —— team@solutionsnotsides.co.uk



Words are important right now - everyone has the right to choose the language they want to use. It is neither the right, nor the place of a British education charity to make rulings on geo-political issues, it is the place of international governments and courts.

Therefore, rather than tell people what terminology we think they should or shouldn't use (beyond our anti-racism guides), we will present in this guide some information about statements from the United Nations (UN), of which the UK is a member, and also British Government positions, so that people can come to an informed decision for themselves.

This information may also change over time as events develop, and we are committed to update our curriculum and resources regularly.

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GLOSSARY



Apartheid:

The United Nations, through its human rights experts, has described Israel's actions in the occupied Palestinian territories as constituting apartheid. In March 2022, Michael Lynk, a UN Special Rapporteur, stated that Israel's policies in these territories meet the international legal definition of apartheid[1][3]. Additionally, other UN experts and reports have echoed this assessment, highlighting a system of racial oppression and discrimination against Palestinians[5][7]. These findings align with reports from various international human rights organizations[2][6]. The UK Government has not applied this label to Israel's actions, but does view the occupation as illegal under International Law (see below).

Sources:

[1] Israel's 55-year occupation of Palestinian Territory is apartheid - ohchr https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/03/israels-55-yearoccupation-palestinian-territory-apartheid-un-human-rights
[2] Israel's apartheid against Palestinians: a cruel system of domination ... https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/02/israels-apartheidagainst-palestinians-a-cruel-system-of-domination-and-a-crime-againsthumanity/
[3] Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in OPT: Israel ... https://www.un.org/unispal/document/special-rapporteur-on-the-situationof-human-rights-in-opt-israel-has-imposed-upon-palestine-an-apartheid-

reality-in-a-post-apartheid-world-press-release/

[4] World Court Finds Israel Responsible for Apartheid

https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/07/19/world-court-finds-israelresponsible-apartheid



[5] Israel/OPT: Latest UN recognition of apartheid comes amid soaring ... https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/10/israel-opt-latest-unrecognition-of-apartheid-comes-amid-soaring-attacks-on-palestinianhomes/

[6] The argument that Israel practices apartheid, explained - Vox https://www.vox.com/23924319/israel-palestine-apartheid-meaninghistory-debate

[7] UN report: Israel has established an 'apartheid regime' - Al Jazeera https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2017/3/18/un-report-israel-has-established-an-apartheid-regime

Colonial:

The United Nations has described Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory as indistinguishable from a "settler-colonial" situation. A UN independent expert stated that this occupation must end to allow Palestinians to exercise their right to self-determination[2]. Additionally, a UN special rapporteur mentioned that Israel treats Palestinian territories like colonies[7]. These statements reflect the UN's perspective on Israel's actions in the occupied territories, aligning them with characteristics of settler colonialism. The UK Government has not described Israel as 'colonial'.

Sources:

[1] Is Israel a "settler-colonial" state? The debate, explained. - Vox https://www.vox.com/world-politics/24128715/israel-palestine-conflict-settlercolonialism-zionism-history-debate
[2] Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territory, tantamount to ... https://operationalsupport.un.org/en/israels-illegal-occupation-of-palestinianterritory-tantamount-to-settler-colonialism-un-expert
[3] Is Israel a settler colonial state? - Stroum Center for Jewish Studies https://jewishstudies.washington.edu/israel-hebrew/why-israel-isnt-a-settlercolonial-state/
[4] Why Israel is Not a Settler Colonial State | AJC https://www.ajc.org/why-israel-isnot-a-settler-colonial-state



[5] Allegation: Israel is a Settler Colonialist Enterprise - ADL https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/allegation-israel-settlercolonialist-enterprise

[6] How international law is used to cover up Israeli settler-colonialism https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/12/10/how-international-law-is-used-to-cover-up-israeli-settler-colonialism

[7] Israel treats Palestinian territories like colonies, says UN rapporteur https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/12/israel-treatspalestinian-territories-like-colonies-says-un-rapporteur

Ethnic Cleansing:

A UN official has accused Israel of ethnic cleansing. Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories, stated that Israel practices ethnic cleansing by removing Palestinians from their homes and historic lands[3]. Additionally, a UN human rights investigator has accused Israel of "ethnic cleansing" in pushing Palestinians out of East Jerusalem[6]. These accusations have been made in the context of ongoing conflicts and military operations involving Israel and the Palestinian territories. The UK Government has not accused Israel of ethnic cleansing.

Sources:

[1] Claim 4: Israel commits ethnic cleansing against the Palestinians https://unwatch.org/item-7/claim/claim-4-israel-commits-ethniccleansing-against-the-palestinians/

[2] Israel, Hamas accused of war crimes in new UN report - BBC News https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cl55gzp7vn9o

[3] UN official accuses Israel of genocide, ethnic cleansing - Asia Times https://asiatimes.com/2023/10/un-official-accuses-israel-of-genocide-ethnic-cleansing/

[4] UN expert warns of new instance of mass ethnic cleansing of ... ohchr https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/un-expertwarns-new-instance-mass-ethnic-cleansing-palestinians-calls



5] UN expert accuses Israel of 'genocide' in Gaza - Al Jazeera https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/3/26/un-expert-accuses-israelof-several-acts-of-genocide-in-gaza [6] U.N. rights investigator accuses Israel of 'ethnic cleansing' | Reuters https://www.reuters.com/article/world/un-rights-investigator-accusesisrael-of-ethnic-cleansing-idUSBREA2K1JO/

[7] UN Expert Accuses Israel Of Several Acts Of 'Genocide' In Gaza https://www.barrons.com/news/un-expert-accuses-israel-of-severalacts-of-genocide-in-gaza-ba3ae5a4

Genocide:

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has found that allegations of genocide are plausible and ordered Israel to take measures to prevent genocidal acts. However, so far, neither the UK Government, nor the ICJ has stated that genocide is occurring in Gaza.

Sources:

[1] Experts react: What the International Court of Justice said (and didn't ... https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/experts-react/experts-react/experts-react-what-the-international-court-of-justice-said-and-didnt-say-in-the-genocide-case-against-israel/
[2] The ICJ's Findings on Plausible Genocide in Gaza and its ... http://opiniojuris.org/2024/04/05/the-icjs-findings-on-plausible-genocide-in-gaza-and-its-implications-for-the-international-criminal-court/
[3] Explaining the International Court of Justice's Ruling on Israel and ... https://global.upenn.edu/perryworldhouse/news/explaining-international-court-justices-ruling-israel-and-gaza



[4] Israel must comply with key ICJ ruling ordering it do all in its power ... https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/01/israel-must-complywith-key-icj-ruling-ordering-it-do-all-in-its-power-to-prevent-genocideagainst-palestinians-in-gaza/

[5] Israel-Gaza: What did the ICJ ruling really say? - BBC News https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c3g9g63jl17o

[6] Israel defying ICJ ruling to prevent genocide by failing to allow aid ... https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/israel-defying-icjruling-to-prevent-genocide-by-failing-to-allow-adequate-humanitarianaid-to-reach-gaza/

[7] Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of ... https://www.icj-cij.org/case/192

[8] What is South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the ICJ? - BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-67922346

Holocaust:

Neither the UN nor the UK Government describe Israel's actions as perpetrating a 'Holocaust'. This term was applied to the Nazi genocide for specific reasons due to the meaning of the Greek term that is the linguistic root of this word and the methods of killing used in that genocide. Therefore, applying this term would be a hurtful 'dig' at Jewish people, as Israel is a majority Jewish state, and the main targets of the Nazi genocide were Jews. See our guide to avoiding hate speech for more information.



Israel and Palestine:

The United Nations (including the UK) recognises Israel. Israel was admitted as a member of the UN on May 11, 1949, following a vote in the General Assembly that approved its application for membership[1] [2]. However, not all UN member states recognise Israel as a sovereign nation; as of December 2020, 165 out of 193 UN member countries recognised Israel[2].

Sources:

[1] Israel and the United Nations - Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel_and_the_United_Nations
[2] Countries that Recognize Israel 2024 - World Population Review https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/countries-thatrecognize-israel
[3] International Recognition of Israel - Jewish Virtual Library https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/international-recognition-of-israel
[4] International Court of Justice ruling confirms that Israel's presence in Palestinian territory is unlawful https://www.doughtystreet.co.uk/news/international-court-justiceruling-confirms-israels-presence-palestinian-territory-unlawful
[5] UN General Assembly demands Israel ends occupation of Palestinian territories https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdx9z96ldveo



Sources:

[6] Declaration of Israel's Independence, 1948 | American Experience https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/truman-israel/
[7] Creation of Israel, 1948 - Office of the Historian - State Department https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/creation-israel
[8] UN top court to give opinion on Israeli occupation https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjerjzxlpvdo

The United Nations (including the UK) does not fully recognise Palestine as a member state but acknowledges it as a non-member observer state. As of June 2024, 146 out of 193 UN member states recognise Palestine as a sovereign state[1][2]. The UN General Assembly granted Palestine this observer status in 2012, which allows participation in debates but not voting rights[2][4]. Despite broad recognition, Palestine's full UN membership is hindered by the United States' veto power in the Security Council[2].

Sources:

[1] UN experts urge all States to recognise State of Palestine | OHCHR https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/06/unexperts-urge-all-states-recognise-state-palestine
[2] International recognition of the State of Palestine https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_recognition_of_the_St ate_of_Palestine
[3] Mapping which countries recognise Palestine in 2024 - Al Jazeera https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/5/22/mappingwhich-countries-recognise-palestine-in-2024
[4] The impact of recognising a Palestinian state - BBC https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn44j1njggjo
[5] As More Governments Recognize State of Palestine, Crucial to Keep ... https://press.un.org/en/2024/gapal1469.doc.htm



[6] UN General Assembly demands Israel ends occupation of Palestinian territories
https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdx9z96ldveo
[7] Declaration of Israel's Independence, 1948 | American Experience | PBS
https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/trumanisrael/
[8] International Court of Justice ruling confirms that Israel's presence in Palestinian territory is unlawful
https://www.doughtystreet.co.uk/news/international-court-justiceruling-confirms-israels-presence-palestinian-territory-unlawful

Martyrdom:

Neither the UN nor the UK Government glorify violence by individuals on either side as 'martyrdom'.

Nakba:

The United Nations has adopted the term "Nakba" to describe the events of 1948, which involved the mass displacement and dispossession of Palestinians during the Arab-Israeli war. The term is used to highlight both historical and ongoing injustices faced by Palestinians. In 2023, the UN held its first-ever commemoration of Nakba Day, marking its recognition of the term and its significance in Palestinian history[1][2][3]. The UK Government has not officially adopted the term "Nakba" in its governmental discourse or policy.



Sources:

[1] Nakba of 1948 and Today Are Not Separate Events, but Ongoing ... https://press.un.org/en/2024/gapal1467.doc.htm

[2] About the Nakba - Question of Palestine - the United Nations

https://www.un.org/unispal/about-the-nakba/

[3] Nakba - Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nakba

[4] The UN is distorting the meaning of the Nakba - UnHerd https://unherd.com/newsroom/the-un-is-distorting-themeaning-of-the-nakba/

[5] UN expert warns of new instance of mass ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, calls for immediate ceasefire https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/un-expertwarns-new-instance-mass-ethnic-cleansing-palestinianscalls

[6] Israel, Hamas accused of war crimes in new UN report https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cl55gzp7vn9o

[7] Claim 4: Israel commits ethnic cleansing against the

Palestinians Archives - UN Watch https://unwatch.org/item-7/claim/claim-4-israel-commits-ethnic-cleansing-againstthe-palestinians/

[8] UK media are suppressing mentions of Israel's 'genocide' in Gaza https://www.declassifieduk.org/uk-media-aresuppressing-mentions-of-israels-genocide-in-gaza/



Occupation:

The United Nations views Israel's presence in the Palestinian Territories as an occupation. The UN General Assembly recently passed a non-binding resolution demanding that Israel end its "unlawful presence" in the Occupied Palestinian Territory within a year[1][2][5]. This resolution reflects the UN's stance, supported by an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice, which also declared Israel's actions in these territories as illegal under international law[1][2].

Sources:

[1] UN General Assembly demands Israel ends occupation of ... - BBC https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cdx9z96ldveo [2] UN votes against Israel's occupation of Palestine: Will it change ... https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/9/19/unga-resolution-againstpalestine-occupation-will-it-change-anything [3] UN General Assembly demands Israel ends occupation of ... - BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdx9z96ldveo [4] The UK's explanation of vote on the UN General Assembly ... https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-uks-explanation-ofvote-on-the-un-general-assembly-resolution-on-the-icjs-advisoryopinion-on-israels-presence-in-the-occupied-palestinian-terr [5] General Assembly Overwhelmingly Adopts Historic Text Demanding ... https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12626.doc.htm [6] UN demands Israel end 'unlawful' presence in Palestinian territories ... https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-demand-israel-endunlawful-presence-palestinian-territories-within-12-months-2024-09-18/

[7] UN experts warn international order on a knife's edge, urge States to ... https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2024/09/un-experts-warninternational-order-knifes-edge-urge-states-comply-icj-advisory



The UK Government also views Israel's presence in the Palestinian Territories as an occupation. The UK Government consistently refers to these areas as the "Occupied Palestinian Territories" and considers Israeli settlements there illegal under international law[1][2]. The UK has called for Israel to end its presence in these territories, aligning with the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion that deems the occupation unlawful[3][4]. The UK advocates for a negotiated two-state solution to resolve the conflict[2].

Sources:

[1] The expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank is wholly ... https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-expansion-of-israelisettlements-in-the-west-bank-is-wholly-unacceptable-and-illegal-ukstatement-at-the-un-security-council

[2] British Government's Current Position: The occupation of Palestinian ... https://balfourproject.org/the-occupation-of-palestinian-land/

[3] International Court of Justice ruling confirms that Israel's presence in ... https://www.doughtystreet.co.uk/news/international-court-justice-rulingconfirms-israels-presence-palestinian-territory-unlawful

[4] ICJ says Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories is illegal - BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cjerjzxlpvdo

[5] UN General Assembly demands Israel ends occupation of ... - BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdx9z96ldveo

[6] Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory - Amnesty International https://www.amnesty.org.uk/issues/israel-and-occupied-palestinian-territory

[7] Israel-Hamas conflict: UK response October 2023 to July 2024 https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9874/
[8] Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories: UK response to the ... https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10085/



Terrorist [Applied to Hamas]:

The United Nations has not officially designated Hamas as a terrorist organisation. A top UN official, Martin Griffiths, stated that "Hamas is not a terrorist group for us," referring to it as a political movement[2]. This position contrasts with many countries, including the United States, European Union, and Israel, which have designated Hamas as a terrorist organisation[1][3]. There have been calls from various entities for the UN to recognise Hamas as a terrorist group, but it remains off the UN Security Council's list of designated terrorist organisations[3].

Sources:

[1] What Is Hamas? | Council on Foreign Relations https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas [2] Top UN Aid Official Says Hamas Is Not a Terrorist Group - FDD https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2024/02/16/top-un-aid-official-sayshamas-is-not-a-terrorist-group/ [3] Senator Collins, Bipartisan Group Urge UN to Designate Hamas as ... https://www.collins.senate.gov/newsroom/senator-collins-bipartisangroup-urge-un-to-designate-hamas-as-a-terrorist-organization [4] Special Coordinator, Stressing 'All Sides Must Urgently Change ... https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15710.doc.htm [5] Israel and Hamas added to UN list for violating children's rights -BBC https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cv223vlerdvo [6] Israel-Hamas conflict: UK response October 2023 to July 2024 https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9874/ [7] Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations - GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groupsor-organisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisationsaccessible-version [8] [DOC] P9_TA(2023)0373 - European Parliament https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0373 EN.docx



However, the UK Government has designated Hamas as a terrorist organisation under the Terrorism Act 2000[1][4][5].

Sources:

[1] Man arrested over chants at pro-Palestine protest - BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgj454xzzy9o [2] Hamas - foreign terrorist organization - DNI.gov https://www.dni.gov/nctc/ftos/hamas_fto.html [3] What Is Hamas? | Council on Foreign Relations https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-hamas [4] Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations - GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribed-terror-groups-ororganisations--2/proscribed-terrorist-groups-or-organisations-accessibleversion [5] UK aid to the West Bank and Gaza Strip: FAQs https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9900/ [6] Israel-Hamas conflict: UK response October 2023 to July 2024 https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9874/ [7] BBC defends policy not to call Hamas 'terrorists' after criticism https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-67076341 [8] BBC Told By UK Government To Call Hamas A Terrorism Group https://deadline.com/2023/10/bbc-hamas-terrorism-uk-government-

pressure-1235568657/



Terrorist [Applied to certain Jewish settlers in the West Bank]: Neither the UN nor the UK Government has explicitly referred to any West Bank Jewish settlers as "terrorists," but the UK has imposed sanctions on extremist Israeli settlers involved in violence against Palestinians in the West Bank[1]. These sanctions include financial and travel restrictions targeting individuals who have committed human rights abuses[1]. While the UK Government has condemned settler violence and called for accountability, it has not officially labelled the settlers as terrorists[1][2].

Sources:

[1] UK sanctions extremist settlers in the West Bank - GOV.UK https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-extremist-settlers-inthe-west-bank

[2] The expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank is wholly ... https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-expansion-of-israelisettlements-in-the-west-bank-is-wholly-unacceptable-and-illegal-ukstatement-at-the-un-security-council

[3] International action against Israeli settlers who commit violence in ... https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-03-05/internationalcommunity-takes-action-against-israeli-settlers-who-commit-violence-inthe-west-bank-grows.html

[4] Israeli settler violence - Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_settler_violence

[5] The UK has helped create the crisis in the Middle East. Do we now ... https://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2024/09/26/the-uk-has-helpedcreate-the-crisis-in-the-middle-east-do-we-now-have-the-objectivity-tohelp-solve-it/

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https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9874/
[7] The British Army in Palestine | National Army Museum
https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/conflict-Palestine
[8] UK slaps sanctions on West Bank settlers for 'egregious' violence ...
https://www.timesofisrael.com/uk-slaps-sanctions-on-west-bank-settlers-for-egregious-violence-following-us-move/



War Crimes:

The International Criminal Court (ICC) has not yet concluded any cases regarding war crimes by Israel or Palestine. An investigation was opened in 2021 into alleged war crimes by Israeli military forces and Palestinian armed groups, including Hamas, since June 2014[1]. Arrest warrants have been requested for leaders from both sides, including Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu and Hamas's Yahya Sinwar[2].

Sources:

[1] International Criminal Court investigation in Palestine - Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Criminal_Court_investigation_in_ Palestine

[2] Statement of ICC Prosecutor Karim A.A. Khan KC: Applications for ... https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/statement-icc-prosecutor-karim-aa-khan-kcapplications-arrest-warrants-situation-state

[3] The ICJ and ICC put Israel on notice but cannot stop the war https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/05/icj-and-icc-put-israel-noticecannot-stop-war

[4] What Do the ICC Warrants Against Israel and Hamas Mean ... - RUSI https://rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/what-do-icc-warrants-against-israel-and-hamas-mean-conflict

[5] State of Palestine | International Criminal Court https://www.icccpi.int/palestine

[6] Alarm in Israel at reports of possible ICC legal action over Gaza - BBC https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-68938022

[7] Have war crimes been committed in Israel and Gaza and what ... https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/oct/31/have-war-crimes-beencommitted-in-israel-and-gaza-and-what-international-laws-apply



Contact Us

- +44 (0)20 7074 4357
 team@solutionsnotsides.co.uk
- www.solutionsnotsides.co.uk
- 🕑 West Hampstead, London.