

Scottish Muslim Awards boycott hotel hosting Israeli football team

From [The Herald](#) and the [Telegraph](#)

Organisers of the Scottish Muslim Awards have decided to boycott a Scots hotel that hosted the Israeli women's football team – and was the scene of police moves to try to eject a small number of pro-Palestinian protesters, the Herald can reveal.

The awards were due to be held at the Macdonald Inchyra Hotel near Falkirk on September 28, but the organisers have said that it will now hold the event “in solidarity with the victims of the ongoing genocide in Gaza”.



A 24-year-old man was charged over an on-the-field protest before Scotland's Women's Euro 2025 qualifier against Israel at

Glasgow's Hampden stadium on Thursday evening. At Hampden thousands of protesters including representatives of Show Israel the Red Card and Scottish Friends of Palestine held a protest outside the stadium calling for an immediate ceasefire in the war in Gaza.

They also hit out at the SFA's decision to allow the game to go ahead, describing it as an attempt to "sportwash" Israel.

Demonstrators held small replica coffins and spread a banner which read "Ceasefire Now" on the ground outside Hampden. A large police presence, which included horses, were outside the largely locked stadium but were evidently unable to stop the protester from breaching their security measures.

The match was delayed for around 30 minutes due to the protests and one person chaining themselves to a goalpost just before kick-off. (He) was led away by police . . . His t-shirt read 'Red card for Israel'.

The match was played behind closed doors as several hundred demonstrators gathered outside the stadium to protest at Israel's military operation in Gaza. When the two sides returned to the field, the Israeli team held up a T-shirt bearing the message "Bring Them Home" in reference to hostages taken by the Hamas group in the official team photo.

The game eventually kicked off 45 minutes later than planned, with [Scotland](#) running out 4-1 winners.

Uefa has banned Israel from hosting football matches following the Hamas attack on Israel last October and then the Israeli's government's response. The Israel national team, as well as its club teams, have instead been playing fixtures at neutral venues in Hungary.

Fifa has been taking legal advice on a motion submitted by the Palestinian football association to suspend Israel from the sport. The Israeli FA labelled the move "cynical".

The following day two protesters went to the Macdonald Inchyra Hotel where the Israel Women's players had been staying to demonstrate against their presence using a loud hailer with police telling them that it was a "public safety" issue.

Organisers of the Scottish Muslim Awards, which aims to recognise and celebrate the success and personal achievements of Muslims from across all walks of Scottish life, has said it is now looking for a new venue after cancelling plans to stage the event at the Macdonald Inchyra Hotel.

A spokesman said: "It is with great disappointment we have to find a new venue for the Scottish Muslim Awards 2024 – an event to recognise the achievements and talents of Scottish Muslims, to overcome the proliferation of Islamophobia, by identifying role models from across all sectors, for a new generation.

"However, we could not host it at a venue which chooses to legitimise the ongoing genocide on the people in Gaza. So, for that reason, we will be choosing a new venue.

"Choosing to host a national sports team of Israel, whilst its government continues the horrific and illegal slaughter of families in Gaza, is not acceptable and not in line with the values of the Scottish Muslim Awards. Therefore we will choose a venue which is in closer alignment with the spirit of the awards."

During the protest on Friday, two members of the Scottish Palestinian Solidarity Campaign decided to make their feelings felt outside the hotel having assumed a right of public access. But they were met by officers of Police Scotland who asked them to move on saying: "The hotel doesn't want you on their land."

One of the protesters responded: "As far as I understand, it is private property with a presumed right of public access, the public can wander in and out at will and we have political rights to free speech here."

The force said officers had engaged with a small number of people entering private grounds of the hotel and were asked to leave "which they did."