

## Where are the red lines?

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I have [already noted](#) Trump's now-stated plan to take Gaza under US control this morning.

The question I need to ask now is, what will Starmer (and other supposed world leaders) do in response?

The UK has not recognised Palestine as a state - although I think it should have done so long ago, joining Ireland, Spain and others in doing so. The Scottish parliament has made its position clear on this issue as well.

The UK has, however, talked about two-state solutions. Now Trump is literally trying to erase that option by suggesting the forcible eviction of Palestinians from their country so that US commercial interests - presumably linked to Trump - might turn Gaza into a leisure resort for the world's wealthy.

Will, in that case, Starmer draw a red line? Will he say that this is unacceptable?

He will have the chance to do so this lunchtime when facing questions to the Prime Minister in the House of Commons. Whilst it is quite easy to imagine Kemi Badenoch ducking this issue, it is hard to imagine it not coming up. So, what might he say?

My suspicion is that Starmer will say nothing. He will prevaricate by suggesting that it is not clear what Trump means. Doing so, he will suggest that this is a hypothetical that does not require him to offer a running commentary.

If that is what he does, he will be wrong to do so. He should have already been saying he - and NATO - should stand up for Canada and Greenland. He should have been condemning the aggression towards Panama. And now he should be reiterating that he believes in a two-state solution for Palestinians, leaving its people free to determine their own future.

There is only one way to treat a bully - and that is to stand up to them. The sooner it is done, the better. It always comes with risk attached. It usually carries a price. But the

sooner it is done, the better.

Trump is a bully. His whole schtick is to be the aggressor, taking those he wishes to victimise (and there is, seemingly, an endless list of them) by surprise as he issues threat after threat, all backed up by the seemingly unlimited power of the USA.

Starmer has to say no to Trump. So do other world leaders. They have to make clear that his territorial ambitions are unacceptable.

There is a need for lines in the sand now, even if in some cases (like Canada, Greenland and Panama), the practicalities of defending those places if Trump could persuade US military commanders to invade them appear to be limited.

True leadership against seemingly impossible odds requires that a stand be taken. That is what is demanded when faced with fascism, as we are.

I am not expecting Starmer to show true leadership today or any time soon. Nor is it likely that anything of that sort is going to be shown in Europe right now. And that is profoundly worrying.