



Bloomberg Philanthropies, Arts Sponsorship, War Crimes: Briefing Summary

In Britain, around 450 arts organisations are currently partnered with Bloomberg Philanthropies. The information we summarise here should make those organisations think again.

As well as being a major arts funder, Bloomberg Philanthropies funds the Bloomberg-Sagol Center for City Leadership at Tel Aviv University. The Center provides training to municipal officials, including those governing illegal Israeli settlements. Maintenance of these settlements, deemed illegal by the UK government, has been identified as a war crime¹ by the UN Human Rights Commissioner and Amnesty International, among others. **Bloomberg Philanthropies is thus implicated in war crimes.**

In July 2025, a UN Report concluded that the private sector and its executives should be held accountable for the corporate machinery that sustains the “displacement and replacement of the Palestinians” from their homes and lands².

The Bloomberg-Sagol Center is committed to a project of Palestinian dispossession:

- Graduates use their position as state officials to champion and uphold policies of occupation, annexation, and violence against Palestinians.
- Teaching staff have close links to Israel’s military intelligence.
- One founder funds an annexationist political party; the other has used his financial resources to strengthen the Israeli state, guilty of the crime of apartheid (ICJ, 2024).

As just one example, trainee **Yisrael Ganz** (Bloomberg-Sagol class of 2022) is leader of the Mateh Benjamin Regional Council, which governs 47 settlements and outposts in the illegally occupied West Bank. He is also leader of the Yesha Council of settlers in the whole of the West Bank. In February 2025, Ganz told a meeting:

“In order to...assert the Jewish people’s historical and biblical claim, Israel must assert its sovereignty over the West Bank...We have to say, ‘This is our state. We will stay here forever, and this is part of the State of Israel.’ And the only way to do this is to apply Israeli sovereignty over these areas.”³

¹ ICRC (accessed 01.2026) International humanitarian law: Settlements https://casebook.icrc.org/a_to_z/glossary/settlements

² UN Report (2025) From Economy of Occupation to Economy of Genocide <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/a-hrc-59-23-from-economy-of-occupation-to-economy-of-genocide-report-special-rapporteur-francesca-albanese-palestine-2025/>

³ The Jerusalem Post (2025) Israel Ganz: PA seeks Israel’s destruction, West Bank sovereignty a must <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-843607>



Another example is **Oshrat Gani Gonen** (Bloomberg-Sagol class of 2022) who leads Drom-Hasharon Regional Council in Israel. In 2024 and 2025, as council leader, she visited units of Israel's occupying forces in the West Bank and said of the Israeli operation that killed 362 Palestinians, including 96 children, it was "bold and determined".

On March 2025, **Gonen** again visited occupation forces, posting on Facebook:

*"We toured the Jenin area this week with the Commander of the Central Command **Avi Bluth**, the Menashe Brigade, and the commander of the Nishon battalion. The commanders presented to us...the activity of the IDF in the refugee camps and Palestinian cities in Samaria. We were impressed by the scope of activity."*⁴

Oshrat Gani Gonen was applauding war crimes according to a 2025 report by Human Rights Watch which described how the Israeli forces she had visited caused "the largest displacement of Palestinians in the West Bank in one operation since the 1967 war." HRW named Major-General Bluth, saying he "should be investigated for individual criminal responsibility, for war crimes and crimes against humanity."

Bloomberg-Sagol trainees and incitement to genocide:

The ICJ has ordered Israel to "take all measures to prevent public incitement to genocide" - but Bloomberg-Sagol trainees are contributing to a discourse that dehumanises Palestinians, legitimates violence against them on a mass scale and establishes conditions for genocide.

Mayor **David Azoulay**, part of the Bloomberg-Sagol Centre's 'Growth Programme'⁵ said: "*the whole Gaza strip should be empty just like Auschwitz, flattened, just like Auschwitz is today*"⁶. In February 2025, Azoulay's words were cited by South Africa in its 'Public dossier of openly available evidence on the State of Israel's acts of genocide against the Palestinians in Gaza.'

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The Bloomberg-Sagol Center perpetuates war crimes through its training of Israeli settler leaders and officials in the Palestinian West Bank. It also empowers officials who incite crimes against humanity. Armed with this knowledge, British cultural organisations should reject partnerships with Bloomberg Philanthropies for as long as it is implicated in grave violations of the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people.

⁴ Gonen (2025) Facebook post

<https://www.facebook.com/oshratganigonon/posts/pfbid036u48bruSKnwXagKTM442oGPr9UuVCzel.sjkqmyNvJdadEA74UkK6RcTSkC7rFsoA>

⁵ Wayback machine web-archive, Bloomberg-Sagol Growth Program page, listing Metualla mayor, David Azoulay <https://web.archive.org/web/20251214170944/https://bloombergsagol.tau.ac.il/en/the-growth-program>

⁶ Haaretz (2023). 'Israeli Local Council Head Calls to 'Flatten Gaza Like Auschwitz Today' in Radio Interview' <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-12-18/ty-article/israeli-local-council-head-calls-to-flatten-gaza-like-auschwitz-today-in-radio-interview/0000018c-7bf9-de44-a9be-7ffd05e90000>