

Ms Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
Mr Valdis Dombrovskis, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission
Mr Charles Michel, President of the European Council
Ms Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament
Mr Alexander De Croo, Prime Minister of Belgium, Presidency of the Council of the European Union
Mr Josep Borrell, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Dear Madams/Sirs,

The undersigned organisations call on the EU to **suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement** in light of the violation of human rights by the State of Israel. These human rights violations constitute a violation of the “essential elements” clauses which state that the Agreement is conditional upon the parties’ respect for human rights and democratic principles. We unequivocally condemn all violations of international law, in particular the killing of civilians and call on the relevant authorities to investigate them without delay .

Israel’s current war on Gaza is causing massive civilian casualties, extensive destruction of civilian infrastructure and the displacement of the overwhelming majority of the population in Gaza.¹ The health system in Gaza has collapsed, hospitals have been bombed and destroyed, health staff killed. The population of Gaza is at imminent risk of famine and death by contagious disease. This is the result of the bombardment of Gaza and blockage by Israel of food, water, fuel, medicines, humanitarian aid and disruption of the sewage system. These are clear, well-documented violations of the human rights of Palestinians.

Human rights abuses by the Israel government did not start in 2023, however. The United Nations Human Rights Council has concluded that prior to this period grave human rights abuses have been committed. The establishment and expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank is among these human rights violations, leading to, among others, the expropriation of private land owned by Palestinians, racial segregation due to the forced eviction of Palestinians and the demolition of their property, a climate of impunity for perpetrators of settler violence and the involvement of Israeli security forces in such violence, and restrictions of freedom of movement for Palestinians.² The Council of the EU expressed its concerns over the blockade of the

¹ <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231228-app-01-00-en.pdf>

² CCPR/C/ISR/CO/5, par. 15, 24, 36 and 42

Gaza strip (prior to October 2023) and called on military operations to be proportionate, in line with international humanitarian law and for Israel to ease restrictions in the Gaza strip.³

The EU considers respect for human rights to constitute an essential element of EU association agreements with partner countries. The provisions of the EU-Israel Association Agreement states that the parties establish the association “considering the importance which the Parties attach...[] to the principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly the observance of human rights and democracy, which form the very basis of the Association;”... and Article 2 states that

“relations between the Parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement.”

The violation of the so-called “essential elements” clauses enables the EU to terminate or suspend fully or partially the agreements, in accordance with Article 60 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. Article 82 of the Association Agreement provides that “Each of the Parties may denounce the Agreement by notifying the other Party.”

In spite of the above mentioned, and other well-documented violations of human rights and democratic principles by the State of Israel, its economy continues to enjoy privileged access to the EU market through the EU-Israel Association Agreement. Trade between the EU and Israel has increased substantially since the signing of the agreement in 2000. The EU is Israel’s biggest trade partner, accounting for 28.8% of its trade in goods in 2022.⁴

According to EU official policy outlined in the ‘Common Approach on the use of political clauses’, agreed by Coreper in 2009,⁵ “serious breaches of the essential elements clauses may trigger the suspension in whole or part of the overall framework agreement and all the linked agreements, including the trade agreement (non-execution clause).” There can be no denying that Israel’s treatment of Palestinians constitutes at the very least, a serious breach of the human rights clauses in the EU-Israel Association Agreement. It would appear that any political and human rights dialogue that the EU has held with Israel has not been effective in preventing these violations, war crimes and other crimes against humanity.

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/03/08/israel-palestine-statement-of-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-european-union-on-the-latest-developments/>

⁴ https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/israel_en

⁵ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/637975/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)637975_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/637975/EPRS_BRI(2019)637975_EN.pdf)

On the 26th of January 2024, the International Court of Justice ruled that the at least some of the accusations by South Africa that Israel is committing genocide are plausible.⁶ The judges established that it is appropriate to investigate the evidence presented, accept the charges and dismissed Israel's call to reject the trial. The court ordered Israel to take measures to prevent a possible genocide in progress that include allowing more humanitarian aid into Gaza and acting against those who issue genocidal statements.⁷ Though the final verdict is yet unknown, the fact that the ICJ considered South Africa's claims as 'plausible' and has issued provisional measures against Israel should raise serious alarm bells in the EU. Regardless of the final ruling of the ICJ, the provisional ruling has direct implications for third party states to the Genocide Convention, to employ all lawful means at their disposal to influence Israel to refrain from acts in breach of the Genocide Convention, including the withholding, reduction, or suspension of any and all forms of assistance, or the suspension or review of trade negotiations and agreements."⁸

What is currently happening in Gaza is the consequence of a political and moral failure of the international community. Suspension of the Association Agreement over the violation of the Agreement's human rights clauses would send a strong message that the EU's commitment to human rights is more than just rhetoric.

We urge you to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement without delay.

Sincerely,

International

ActionAid International
CADTM International
Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
ECCP - European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine
Ekō
European Coordination of La Via Campesina
European Trade Union Network for Justice in Palestine
Fédération internationale pour les droits humains
GRAIN
Oxfam

National

Academics for Palestine
ActionAid France

Ireland
France

⁶ ICJ/192, paragraph 54

⁷ ICJ/192, paragraph 86

⁸ <https://apidiakoniase.cdn.triggerfish.cloud/uploads/sites/2/2024/02/South-Africa-v.-Israel-Provisional-Measures-and-Third-States.pdf>

ActionAid Ireland	Ireland
Afri (Action from Ireland)	Ireland
AITEC	France
Aliança per l'emergència climàtica València	Spain - País Valencià
AMAL – Asociación Madrileña de Ateos y Librepensadores	Spain
Amigos de la Tierra	Spain
Amis de la Terre France	France
Amis de Sabeel France	France
Arrels – Associació Cultural i Medi Ambiental	Spain
Asamblea Antibelicista de Teruel	Spain
Asamblea Ciudadana Gana Guadix	Spain
Asamblea Plaza de los Pueblos Madrid	Spain
Asociación Actúa por un Mundo Sostenible	Spain
Asociación Canaria de Juristas por la Paz y los Derechos Humanos - JUPADEHU	Spain - Canarian Islands
Asociación Comunidad Palestina en Canarias	Spain
Asociación Cultural "La Moravilla"	Spain
Asociación de Amistad con el Pueblo Saharaui de Sevilla	Spain
Asociación de Juristas Afroeuropeos - Ajae	Spain
Asociación de la Comunidad Hispano-Palestina “Jerusalén”	Spain
Asociación Internacional de Juristas por Sáhara Occidental - IAJUWS	Spain
Asociación Madrileña de Enfermería Gerontológica - AMEG	Spain
Asociación Madrileña de Salud Pública (AMaSaP)	Spain
Asociación para la Defensa de las Pensiones Públicas de Canarias	Spain
Asociación Pueblos Vivos Cuenca	Spain
Asociación Sapiencia	Spain
Asociación Taller Educación en Valores Alternativos (CALA)	Spain
Asociación Uyamaa	Spain
Asociación Iniciativa Cambio Personal, Justicia Global	Spain
Asociación para la Defensa de la Sanidad Pública de Madrid	Spain
Assemblea 15M Sarrià-Sant Gervasi	Spain - Catalonia
Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine (AURDIP°)	France
Association France Palestine Solidarité (AFPS)	France
Attac	France
Attac Austria	Austria
ATTAC España	Spain
AURDIP	France
Avance Solidario	Spain
BDS France	France
Belgian Academics and Artists for Palestine (BA4P)	Belgium
Bicicletos Viajes	Spain
Bienvenidxs Refugiadxs Huesca	Spain
BIP-jetzt e.V.	Germany
Bisan Center for Research and Development	Palestine

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Canarias	Spain
Broederlijk Delen	Belgium
CADTM France	France
CCFD-Terre Solidaire	France
Centre for Global Education	Ireland
Centro Social Tiritanas Comunal	Spain
CGT	France
Christian Aid Ireland	Ireland
CJACP	France
CNCD-11.11.11	Belgium
Col.lectiu Agudells	Spain - Catalonia
Colectivo "Antifascistas Elsa Wolff"	Spain
Colectivo "Pasaje Seguro Cantabria"	Spain
Colectivo Noviolencia	Spain
Collectif Stop Mercosur	France
Comando Violeta - Colectivo Feminista de Cuenca	Spain
Comhlámh	Ireland
Comhlámh Trade Justice	Ireland
Comisiones Obreras (CCOO)	Spain
Comité Oscar Romero	Spain
Comité pour une Paix Juste au Proche-Orient	Luxembourg
Comunidad Hispano Palestina en Sevilla	Spain
Comunidad Santo Tomás de Aquino	Spain
Confederación Intersindical	Spain
Confederación Intersindical Galega (CIG)	Spain - Galicia
Confédération paysanne	France
Coordinadora Estatal por la Defensa del Sistema Público de Pensiones - Córdoba	Spain
Cork Palestine Solidarity Campaign	Ireland
Cristianos de Base	Spain
Culture de Palestine	France
De-Colonizer	Belgium
Deutsch-Palästinensische Gesellschaft e.V.	Germany
Dones x Dones	Spain
Ecologistas en Acción	Spain
ELA	Spain - Basque Country
Entraide & Fraternité	Belgium
Eurochild	Belgium
Fédération Artisans du Monde	France
Feministas Usera	Spain
Financial Justice Ireland	Ireland
Flüchtlingskinder im Libanon e.V.	Germany
Foodwatch France	France
Fracking Free Clare	Ireland
Fridays for Future Spain	Spain

Friends of the Earth Finland	Finland
Friends of the Earth Ireland	Ireland
Fundación Aequitas	Spain
Fundacion Atabal	Spain
Gaza Action Ireland	Ireland
Greek Affiliate of IPPNW	Greece
Grupo belga Solidair met Guatemala	Belgium
Grupo Cristiano de Reflexión-Acción	Spain
Grupo de Noviolencia Elaia	Spain
Grupo de Reflexión y Formación Cristiana de Gerena (Sevilla)	Spain
Handel Anders! coalitie	Netherlands
Huesca con Palestina	Spain
Iniciativas de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo - ICID	Spain
Intal	Belgium
Intersindical Solidària	Spain - País Valencià
Ireland Palestine Mental Health Network	Ireland
Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign	Ireland
Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Ireland
Irish Council for Civil Liberties	Ireland
Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions Germany	Germany
Jewish-Palestinian Dialogue Group Munich	Germany
La Cimade	France
La Comuna - Asociación de presos y represaliados por la dictadura franquista	Spain
LAB sindikatua	Spain - Basque Country
Ligue des droits de l'Homme	France
Llegat Jaume Botey i Vallès	Spain - Catalonia
Lurgatz Talde Feminista	Spain - Basque Country
Madrileños por el Derecho a Decidir	Spain
Médicos del Mundo	Spain
MiGreat	Netherlands
MOC (Mouvement Ouvrier Chrétien)	Belgium
Movimiento No Violencia	Spain
MRAP (Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les peuples)	France
Naturaca	Spain
Nature et Solidarité	France
Naturefriends Greece	Greece
Not Here Not Anywhere	Ireland
Novact	Spain
NWRG	Italy
Observatori DESC	Spain - Catalonia
Organización Nacional para el Diálogo y la Participación - ONDA	Spain
Overijssel voor Palestina	Netherlands
Oxfam Ireland	Ireland

Palestine Solidarity Committee Stuttgart	Germany
Panteras Rosa - Frente de Combate à LesBiGayTransfobia	Portugal
PAX	Netherlands
Pax Christi France	France
Plataforma "Alicante por la Paz"	Spain
Plataforma Aturem la Guerra	Spain - Catalonia
Plataforma ciudadana "Stop Mare Mortum"	Spain
Plataforma Ciudadana de Córdoba por la Defensa del Sistema Público de Pensiones	Spain
Plataforma Córdoba con Palestina	Spain
Plataforma de Tenerife con Palestina	Spain
Plataforma de Sanitari@s con Palestina	Spain
Plateforme des ONG françaises pour la Palestine	France
Polish Zero Waste Association	Poland
Red de Solidaridad Popular de Jinámar	Spain
Reds - Red de solidaridad para la transformación social	Spain - Catalonia
Respeto Animal Murcia	Spain
Revista Alandar	Spain
Revuelta Mujeres en la Iglesia	Spain
Rotterdam Palestina Coalitie	Netherlands
Rubí Solidari	Spain - Catalonia
Rumbo a Gaza	Spain
Sadaka - The Ireland Palestine Alliance	Ireland
Saharacciones Tenerife	Spain - Canarian Islands
SETEM Catalunya	Spain - Catalonia
Sindicato de Administración Pública de CGT Alicante	Spain
Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de la Administración de Castilla y León - STACYL	Spain
Síolta Chroí	Ireland
Sociedad Española de Profesorado y Plataforma de Filosofía (SEPFi)	Spain
Solidaires	France
Solsoc	Belgium
SOMO	Netherlands
SOUTIEN BELGE OVERSEAS	Belgium
STAND & Suas Educational Development	Ireland
Stichting Groningen-Jabalya	Netherlands
SUDS - Associació Internacional de Solidaritat i Cooperació	Spain - Catalonia
Syndicat de l'éducation nationale SNES	France
Transnational Institute (TNI)	Netherlands
Trinity BDS	Ireland
Trinity College Dublin's Student Union	Ireland
TROCA - Plataforma por um Comércio Internacional Justo	Portugal
UDMF	France
UJFP	France
Unison NI	Northern Ireland

Viva Salud
Yayoflautas de Córdoba
ZAMBRA

Zehar-Errefuxiatuekin

Belgium
Spain
Spain
Spain - Basque
Country