

The European Union is gravely concerned with the situation in Gaza and the escalation in the West Bank. In its conclusions of 27 June and 17 October 2024, the European Council welcomed the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2735 calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the release of all hostages and a significant and sustained increase in the flow of humanitarian assistance. It further condemned the ongoing extremist settler violence in the West Bank and deplored all loss of civilian life.

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) regularly discusses the situation in the Middle East. On 18 March 2024, the FAC had an exchange of views on the EU-Israel Association Agreement which is based on shared values such as the respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy¹. On 24 June 2024, the FAC further discussed the matter, including the possibility of an Association Council with Israel².

In response to the question on possible initiatives regarding the Association Agreement, it should be pointed out that, in accordance with Article 218(9) TFEU, it is for the Commission or the High Representative, as the case may be, to submit a proposal for a Council decision. In that respect, on 18 November 2024, the FAC discussed the proposal of the High Representative to suspend the political dialogue between the EU and Israel under the Association Agreement³.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2024/03/18/>

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2024/06/24/>

³ https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2024/11/18/?utm_source=brevo&utm_campaign=AUTOMATED%20-%20Alert%20-%20Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_id=3318

The European Union has reiterated its unwavering commitment to lasting and sustainable peace in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council. It has also reaffirmed that its long-standing position on the Middle East Process – as set out in several Council conclusions – is a commitment to achieving a two-state solution with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous, sovereign and viable State of Palestine living side-by-side in peace, security and mutual recognition⁴, and stressed that a credible pathway to Palestinian statehood is a crucial component of that political process.

⁴ 13103/22, 11954/14