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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.9.2025)

The High Representative/Vice-President (HR/VP) and the Commission have reiterated on numerous occasions that all parties fighting in a conflict are obliged to respect international humanitarian law, be they governmental forces or non-state armed groups. In particular, civilians cannot be deprived of liberty unless there are imperative reasons of security, and internment may never be used as a form of punishment.

At the Foreign Affairs Council meeting in May 2025, the HR/VP announced a review of Israel's compliance with Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement¹. The review was presented at the Foreign Affairs Council meeting on 23 June 2025² and concluded that there are indications that Israel would be in breach of Article 2. On this basis, the EU engaged in a frank and principled dialogue which led to Israel's agreement to take significant steps to improve the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip. At the July 2025 Foreign Affairs Council, the HR/VP announced the humanitarian understanding with Israel and informed Member States that the EU will continue to closely monitor the implementation of the agreed actions and report to Member States.

On 29 July 2025, the Commission proposed to partially suspend Israel's participation in Horizon Europe³. The suspension, which comes as a reaction to the review under Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, specifically concerns the participation of entities established in Israel in activities funded under the Accelerator of the European Innovation Council⁴. For the Commission's proposal to be adopted, it must receive the support of a qualified majority in the Council of the EU.

¹ https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/israel/documents/eu_israel/asso_agree_en.pdf.

² <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2025/06/23/>.

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_1921.

⁴ https://north-africa-middle-east-gulf.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-proposes-partial-suspension-israels-association-horizon-europe-2025-07-29_en.