

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002449/26
to the Commission
Lynn Boylan (The Left)
(15 June 2026)**

Subject: Consistency in the application of sporting boycotts

The Commissioner responsible for sport, Glenn Micallef, set a standard for the intersection of international law and sport when stating in relation to Russia on X that:

‘Sport unites when it stands on principle. It divides when it compromises them’ ⁽¹⁾ and ‘sport cannot reward aggression’ ⁽²⁾. While the Commission has consistently been in favour of isolating Russian athletic delegations, a striking discrepancy exists concerning Israel whose athletes and fans continue to enjoy unfettered access to European sporting arenas despite multiple provisional measures issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) warning of plausible acts of genocide.

1. Does the Commission agree that ‘sport cannot reward aggression’ by Israel, which has launched wars of aggression on neighbouring countries and, if so, what measures does it propose to take to prevent Israel from being rewarded?
2. What criteria does the Commission apply to ensure that the principles are applied universally and without political double standards?

Submitted: 15.6.2026

**Answer given by Mr Micallef on behalf of the European Commission
(12 August 2026)**

The Commission recalls that sport should uphold fundamental values, including respect for international law. It should never be weaponised for propaganda or to normalise acts of aggression.

Sport organisations are autonomous, but with this autonomy comes the responsibility to ensure good governance and to uphold the integrity and values of sport.

The Commission’s position on Russia is consistent with the EU’s restrictive measures adopted in response to Russia’s unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine.

As the circumstances underlying the EU’s position on Russia remain unchanged, and with Russian attacks on civilian infrastructure continuing, there is no basis for changing the current approach. Reversing it would risk undermining the coherence of the EU’s response and could be exploited for propaganda purposes.

The Commission notes that, in the case of Russia, sporting organisations took autonomous decisions within their respective competences against the backdrop of the broad restrictive measures adopted by the EU and many international partners. This contributed to a coherent international response.

While decisions on participation in sporting competitions remain the responsibility of the competent sporting organisations, the Commission considers that, where the international community adopts restrictive measures in response to serious breaches of international law, it is appropriate for those organisations to consider whether their approach remains consistent with the fundamental values of sport.

¹ <https://x.com/GlennMicallef/status/2024064875249484105>, 18 February 2026.

² <https://x.com/GlennMicallef/status/2044470991103864875>, 15 April 2026.