

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002515/26  
to the Commission**

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(17 June 2026)

**Subject:** Systematic sexualised torture against Palestinian detainees

A recent article in *The New York Times* <sup>(1)</sup> compiles heart-rending interviews with Palestinians recounting a pattern of widespread sexual violence by Israeli settlers, soldiers, prison guards and Shin Bet interrogators against men, women and children. Testimonies describe rape, rape with objects, gang rape, beatings of genitals, sexual abuse involving dogs, and the taking of photographs during assaults to coerce cooperation, followed by threats after release.

These allegations reflect a systemic pattern of violence and dehumanisation, rather than isolated acts. They corroborate findings documented by organisations such as Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor <sup>(2)</sup> and B'Tselem <sup>(3)</sup>, and a United Nations <sup>(4)</sup> report concluding that Palestinians are 'systematically' subjected to sexualised torture with at least implicit encouragement from senior civilian and military leaders. Israel has rejected calls to investigate abuses against Palestinians.

Since October 2023, Israel has detained over 20 000 Palestinians in the West Bank, largely without charging them, and has denied these detainees access to basic rights.

1. Does the Commission condemn these practices?
2. Will these practices be considered a further breach of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement <sup>(5)</sup>, justifying its suspension?
3. What could the Commission do to help ensure that the International Committee of the Red Cross has full and immediate access to all detention facilities holding Palestinian detainees?

Submitted: 17.6.2026

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

(12 August 2026)

The EU is concerned by reports of sexual violence and other forms of ill-treatment against Palestinian detainees. All prisoners and detained persons must be treated with dignity, in line with international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

The EU has reiterated consistently that there must be accountability for violations of international law <sup>(1)</sup>. The EU continues to support independent investigations into all alleged violations and abuses of international humanitarian law, with a view to ending impunity for crimes committed by all parties to the conflict.

The EU has taken note of the ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court lifting the ban on visits to Palestinian prisoners by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and calls for its speedy implementation.

The EU recalls that all states and armed groups are legally obliged to grant the ICRC access to all individuals detained in relation to armed conflicts. The ICRC must be allowed to carry out this work at all times in accordance with its mandate under the Geneva Conventions <sup>(2)</sup>.

Respect for human rights and democratic principles constitutes an essential element of the EU-Israel Association Agreement <sup>(3)</sup>. In 2025, in light of the catastrophic situation in Gaza, it was conducted a review of Israel's compliance with its obligations under Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/11/opinion/israel-palestinians-sexual-violence.html?unlocked\\_article\\_code=1.hIA.kfgZ.ZMP5yQa7u9k7&smid=url-share](https://www.nytimes.com/2026/05/11/opinion/israel-palestinians-sexual-violence.html?unlocked_article_code=1.hIA.kfgZ.ZMP5yQa7u9k7&smid=url-share).

<sup>2</sup> <https://euromedmonitor.org/uploads/reports/En-Another-Genocide.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.btselam.org/publications/202601\\_living\\_hell](https://www.btselam.org/publications/202601_living_hell).

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session58/a-hrc-58-crp-6.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the State of Israel, of the other part (OJ L 147, 21.6.2000, p. 3, [http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree\\_internation/2000/384/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2000/384/oj)).

<sup>(1)</sup> [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-statement-%E2%80%93-un-security-council-open-debate-women-peace-and-security-honouring-promise\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-statement-%E2%80%93-un-security-council-open-debate-women-peace-and-security-honouring-promise_en).

<sup>(2)</sup> <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/gciv-1949>.

<sup>(3)</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/israel/documents/eu\\_israel/asso\\_agree\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/archives/delegations/israel/documents/eu_israel/asso_agree_en.pdf).

Given the conclusion of the review that Israel would be in breach of its obligations, in September 2025 the President of the Commission proposed a package of measures on which discussions are ongoing in the Council.

The EU continues to monitor developments closely and to raise its concerns with the Israeli authorities, including on the treatment of detainees.

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