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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas
on behalf of the European Commission
(20.10.2026)

The EU has long been clear about its strong opposition to Israel's settlement policy, which represents an obstacle to peace, and carries the risk of further instability in the West Bank.

It remains the EU's firm position that settlements are illegal under international law. During the European Council meeting on 19 March 2026¹, Member States unanimously condemned Israel's unilateral actions to expand its presence in the West Bank and called on the Government of Israel to reverse these decisions, to abide by its obligations under international law and to protect the Palestinian population of the occupied territories. This is also reflected in the exclusion of settlement goods from preferential tariff treatment and the exclusion of Israeli entities in the occupied territories from EU programmes.

The EU continues to strongly condemn the growing settler violence against Palestinian civilians, including violence against Christian communities, imposing sanctions on individuals and entities involved in violence against Palestinians in the West Bank and underlining the legal and reputational consequences for businesses participating in economic activities with Israeli settlements. The EU and its Member States are continuously engaging with the heads of Churches in Jerusalem. The EU has denounced hate crime incidents, property destruction and physical abuse and attempts to impose municipal taxation on Church and religious properties and the takeover of property². Moreover, the EU reiterates³ its call for the upholding the Status Quo and protection of the special status and universal character of Jerusalem and its Old City.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/lwhk3itd/en-20260319-european-council-conclusions.pdf>.

² 2 May 2024, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/palestine-occupied-palestinian-territory-west-bank-and-gaza-strip/mount-zion-local-eu-statement-christian-presence-jerusalem_en?s=206.

³ 12 February 2026, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/palestine-occupied-palestinian-territory-west-bank-and-gaza-strip/local-eu-statement-heads-mission-jerusalem-and-ramallah_en?s=206.