

(English version)

Priority question for written answer P-000539/25
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Marc Botenga (The Left), Fernando Barrena Arza (The Left), Ilaria Salis (The Left), Lynn Boylan (The Left), Özlem
Demirel (The Left), Giorgos Georgiou (The Left), Jonas Sjöstedt (The Left), Danilo Della Valle (The Left), Merja
Kyllönen (The Left), Irene Montero (The Left)
(5 February 2025)

Subject: EU-Israel Association Council meeting 2025

The EU plans to hold an Association Council meeting with Israel in February 2025. Due to Israel's disregard for human rights and international law, including through illegal settlement expansion in the West Bank, no such meetings took place between 2012 and 2022. Similar concerns impeded the meetings in 2023 and 2024.

Indeed, Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which constitutes the framework for these meetings, states that 'relations between the Parties ... shall be based on respect for human rights', underscoring that this 'constitutes an essential element of this Agreement'.

Since the 2022 meeting of the Association Council, the International Court of Justice has confirmed the illegal character of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. The International Criminal Court has issued an arrest warrant for the Israeli prime minister for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

1. Does the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy recognise that war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide violate Article 2?
2. Will the meeting of the Association Council be made conditional upon Israel's compliance with Article 2? If not, why not?
3. If the meeting does take place, what measures will the European side put on the table to make Israel comply with Article 2?

Submitted: 5.2.2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(11 March 2025)

Following the terrorist attacks by Hamas against Israel on 7 October 2023, the EU has consistently reiterated that Israel has the right to defend itself in line with international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

The EU is gravely concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, and has fully supported the negotiations to reach a ceasefire/hostage release agreement.

Rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access is an obligation under international law. The EU has been playing its part and recently announced EUR 120 million in humanitarian aid to the Palestinians ⁽¹⁾.

The EU is strongly committed to international criminal justice. The EU has taken note of the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and supports the ICC and its principles set out in the Rome statute. All Member States have ratified the Rome Statute, which means that they are under an obligation to implement arrest warrants issued by the ICC.

The EU has a long-standing position of non-recognition of Israel's sovereignty over the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 and considers Israel's settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory as illegal.

EU positions and policies are fully aligned with the United Nations resolutions ⁽²⁾ regarding the status of the occupied Palestinian territory and are therefore overall consistent with the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice ⁽³⁾.

The EU keeps its diplomatic and trade relations with third countries under constant review. The EU has been clear that political engagement and dialogue are the most effective way to convey EU concerns, including to the Israeli partners.

⁽¹⁾ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/news/eu-announces-new-eu120-million-humanitarian-aid-package-gaza-2025-01-16_en

⁽²⁾ Notably United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016), [https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2334\(2016\)](https://docs.un.org/en/S/RES/2334(2016))

⁽³⁾ Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/186/186-20240719-adv-01-00-en.pdf>

The High Representative/Vice-President has convened the EU-Israel Association Council on 24 February 2025 ⁽⁴⁾, which provided an opportunity for the EU and its Member States to discuss the situation in the Middle East and convey EU concerns to Israel.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/international-ministerial-meetings/2025/02/24/>