

Concerning Ukraine, the Council has not discussed the issue of the use of cluster munitions by Russia in the attacks of 13 April 2025. The EU recognises the humanitarian goals of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and remains steadfast in its commitment to promoting the protection of civilians from the devastating impacts of explosive remnants of war, including cluster munitions. The EU is concerned by the impact on civilian populations of the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions, including the use of cluster munitions by Russia in its unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine in blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter.

Concerning Gaza, the EU deplores the breakdown of the ceasefire, which has caused a large number of civilian casualties in recent air strikes. It also deplores the refusal of Hamas to hand over the remaining hostages. The EU has called for an immediate return to the full implementation of the ceasefire-hostage release agreement¹. Israel is bound by international humanitarian law (IHL) and applicable norms of international human rights law (IHRL), including, as an occupying power, the obligation to protect the population under occupation. The EU has called on Israel to adhere strictly to the rules and principles of IHL and IHRL governing the use of force and the conduct of hostilities, including humanity, necessity, distinction and proportionality².

The most recent EU-Israel Association Council, held on 24 February 2025, served as institutional framework for political dialogue and cooperation under the EU-Israel Association Agreement. At this meeting, the EU also recalled that, pursuant to Article 2 of the Association Agreement, relations between the European Union and Israel must be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles³. Furthermore, following the discussion at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council on 20 May 2025, the High Representative announced the launch of a review of Israel's compliance with Article 2 of the Association Agreement⁴.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/viyhc2m4/20250320-european-council-conclusions-en.pdf>

² <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6511-2025-INIT/en/pdf>

³ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-6511-2025-INIT/en/pdf>

⁴ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2025/05/20/>

No decision has yet been taken by the Council on the Commission proposal⁵ of 26 March 2025 regarding the extension of the EU-Israel Action Plan.

⁵ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7603-2025-INIT/en/pdf>