

## **Open letter to EU institutions and EU Member States: Stop Israel's war crimes and prioritise the Palestinian people's fight against genocide and apartheid**

Dear EU political leaders,

We write to you as a collective of civil society organisations committed to the principles of **peace, democracy, decolonisation, and anti-imperialism**. We call for immediate and ethical action by the EU to prioritise the Palestinian people's fight against genocide and to cooperate with Palestinians and international partners, including those from the Global South, to prepare the ground for lasting peace and human security for Palestinians and Israelis alike, in full recognition of long-standing Palestinian demands to reclaim indigenous life and land.

The latest cycle of violence in Israel/Palestine is a horrific but inevitable consequence of a long and entangled history of **European totalitarianism, Israeli settler colonialism, British imperialism, US hegemony**, and the intentional derailing of a just peace process enabled by the silence of the EU, the US and the UK. While we grieve every civilian life lost equally, **Palestinians have been, and continue to be, the oppressed group under this apartheid structure of power**. As outlined by Jewish Voice for Peace, 'The root of violence is oppression.'<sup>[1]</sup>

Since 7 October, EU institutions and some national governments have expressed their solidarity with Israel (only) and its right to "defend itself" with impunity, even projecting Israeli flags on EU buildings. Such actions have **systematically erased Palestinian people's voices and rights and ignored a long history of Israeli settler colonialism and apartheid that lie at the root of this cycle of violence**.

European Commission President Ursula von Der Leyen and European Parliament President Roberta Metsola visited Israel on 14 October 2023, once again expressing their unreserved solidarity with Israel on behalf of the European Union as Israel imposed a total blockade on the Gaza Strip, cutting off fuel, water, energy, and food supplies in violation of international human rights standards. On 17 October 2023, von der Leyen stated that "There is no contradiction in standing in solidarity with Israel and acting for the humanitarian needs of the Palestinians."<sup>[2]</sup> **This response can only be understood as full EU complicity in Israeli war crimes against Palestinians, including collective punishment and genocide**.

It exposes the EU's double standards in its foreign policy as it fails to stand for the people of Gaza as it has done for Ukraine against Russian aggression and similar acts of terror. **In the long term, this will only undermine the EU's democracy and its international credibility**.

It has also legitimised state violence to repress those standing up for Palestinian rights, and encouraged a surge in Islamophobic, racist attacks and violence against Palestinian activists and allies, including Jewish activists against apartheid, in Europe, Jerusalem, the West Bank, Israel, and across the world. The EU's belligerent rhetoric has contributed to a cultural climate leading to a rise in hate crimes against Muslims, Arabs, and Jews in Europe.

We condemn the dominant EU political response to the war crimes in the occupied territories and the genocide taking place in Gaza. We welcome the few political leaders that have opposed it.<sup>[3]</sup> **We call on EU institutions and EU Member States to prioritise the Palestinian people's fight against genocide and apartheid by:**

- 1. Ceasefire:** Calling for an immediate ceasefire;
- 2. Humanitarian aid:** Firmly pressuring Israel, the Occupying Power, to respect its obligations under international law and to lift the illegal siege on Gaza and restore access to water,

electricity, and fuel; and immediately responding to the humanitarian needs and calls for aid by Palestinians, including ensuring the vital delivery of medicines and life-saving supplies to Gaza;

3. **Arms and technology trade embargo:** Halting at once all military exports, technology transfers and assistance to the Israeli settler colonial ethnostate.
4. **Accountability:** Holding Israel accountable for its violations of international law and collective punishment against civilians, including by publicly and unconditionally supporting the current investigation carried out by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court;
5. **Amplification of Palestinian voices:** Organising a public hearing in the European Parliament with representatives from Palestinian human rights organisations in order to start discussions for a lasting and just peace;
6. **Protection of civic space:** Protecting the civic space, including the right of peaceful assembly, expression and association of Palestinian civil society and activists both within Palestine and beyond.
7. **Commitment to justice for the Palestinian people:** Committing to an end to the occupation of Palestine, recognising the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality, and Respecting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes as stipulated in UN resolution 194.

As long as Palestinians remain oppressed and their calls for decolonisation are sidelined, the cycle of violence is likely to continue, with disproportionate and deadly consequences for Palestinians.

#### Footnotes:

[1] Jewish Voice for Peace, [Statement: The root of violence is oppression](#).

[2] <https://x.com/vonderleyen/status/1714348558877352297?s=20>

[3] We are referring to stances taken in by the Irish government (see [related article](#)) and Podemos (see [related article](#)).

[4] Demands 2 and 4 are taken over from the demands as expressed in this letter by Palestinian civil society organisations: <https://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/21904.html>

[5] As outlined by [Palestinian Civil Society in the Palestinian BDS National Committee](#).

#### Co-signatories:

1. #DiasporaVote!
2. Academics for Palestine
3. Advancing Together
4. Al-Haq
5. Alliance for Black Justice in Poland (BJP)
6. Anti-Racist Forum ry
7. Aralez
8. Aruna Global South
9. Assopace Palestina - Italy
10. Black Women Radicals
11. BMS\_Berlin Migrant Strikers
12. Bridge EU
13. CADI - Comitato Antirazzista Durban Italia
14. Center for Policies, Initiatives and Research PLATFORMA
15. Central and Eastern European Feminist Research Network
16. Centre for interactive inclusion of Roma Otaharin
17. Centre for Peace Studies (Zagreb)
18. CitizensLab e.V.

19. Civil Service International Germany
20. Change Partnership
21. Cloudberry Collective
22. Comision Legal Sol
23. Connected Differences e.V.
24. Consorzio Materahub industrie culturali e creative scarl
25. Dar al Janub - Verein für antirassistische und friedenspolitische Initiative
26. Debt for Climate South Africa
27. Decolonial International Network
28. Decolonizing Sexualities Network
29. Ecomood Portugal
30. Een Andere Joodse Stem (Another Jewish Voice) / Belgium
31. Emergent Justice Collective
32. Engagement arts
33. Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice
34. Equipo Decenio Afrodescendiente España
35. EUI Decolonising Initiative
36. EuroMed Rights
37. European Legal Support Center
38. European Sex Workers Rights Alliance (ESWA)
39. Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia - FAGiC
40. Feminist Translocalities
41. Fem-R ry
42. FFIPP Europe
43. Free Palestine Collective at CEU
44. French Jewish Peace Union (UJFP)
45. Fundacja Jaw Dikh, Poland
46. Gastivists Collective
47. Gibanje za pravice Palestincev, Slovenia
48. Greek Forum of Refugees
49. Green Twenties
50. Haringey Welcome
51. Headquarters of the movement - HOTM
52. Heartbeats Innovation & Communication
53. Humanitas - Centre for Global Education and Cooperation
54. INSPIRIT Creatives NGO
55. Intal Globalize Solidarity
56. international anti-colonial network
57. International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN) Argentina/Spain
58. International Jewish Collective for Justice in Palestine
59. IStandWithOLive
60. Ivorian Community of Greece
61. Jewish Network for Palestine
62. Jewish Voice for a Just Peace in the Middle East
63. Jewish Voice for Labour (UK)
64. Judeobolschewiener\*innen
65. Juno Visuals
66. KaskoSan Roma Charity
67. Kif Kif vzw
68. Lagrange Points Brussels
69. Learning Network on Decolonization

70. Legal Centre Lesvos
71. LE KIOSK
72. Listening House Media
73. Madera Creation - Romania
74. Mani Rosse Antirazziste
75. Migrant Tales
76. Minority Initiative
77. New Women Connectors
78. Novact
79. Observatori Antropologia Conflictu Urbano (OACU) - Universidad de Barcelona
80. Open Paths Athens
81. Oyoun Berlin
82. Palästina Solidarität Österreich
83. Personae Of Color
84. PIC- Legal Center for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment, Slovenia
85. Racism and Technology Center
86. Revibra Europe
87. Right to return committee in Norway
88. Roma Active Albania
89. Roma and Travellers Mediation Center Belgium
90. Ruskeat Tytöt ry (Brown Girls association)
91. SELFOP
92. SIFIR AYRIMCILIK DERNEĞİ-ZERO DISCRIMINATION ASSOCIATION
93. Somoud Greece
94. Slovo 21, z.s.
95. Sounds Queer?
96. South African Jews for a Free Palestine
97. South/South Movement
98. Spoiler Art
99. State of the Arts
100. Systemic Justice
101. Tamkeen for Legal aid and Human Rights
102. The Center for Muslim Rights in Denmark
103. The Cordoba Foundation
104. The Fire These Times
105. The Palestine Committee in Norway
106. The Palestine Institute for Public Diplomacy
107. The Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy - MIFTAH
108. Trademark Belfast
109. Transnational Institute
110. Trans United Europe
111. Union of French Muslim Democrats
112. Union of Justice
113. Union of Palestinian Communities, Institutions and Activities in Europe
114. VOICIFY-European Forum for Youth With Lived Migration Experiences
115. Women in Black Vienna
116. Živi atelje DK (Kolektiv Žene ženama)

*More signatures continue to come in. Find an up-to-date list of signatures [here](#).*