

Brussels, 18 August 2025

To: Kaja Kallas

High Representative for
Foreign Affairs and Security
Policy and Vice-President of
the European Commission

[Letter sent by e-mail]

European Trade Unions call for more decisive and principled action by the European Union on Gaza

Dear High Representative Ms Kallas,

As European trade unionists committed to justice, human rights, and international law, we write to you with deep concern regarding the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza and the ongoing actions of the Israeli Government.

Trade unions across Europe have been raising our voices to ask for EU action about the unconscionable humanitarian situation in Gaza, the continued and deliberate obstruction of humanitarian aid, the large-scale destruction of civilian infrastructure, and the overwhelming civilian death toll in Gaza, including workers and trade unionists.

It is essential for the EU to use all tools available to bring about an immediate and lasting ceasefire, and to ensure full, unimpeded, and sustained access for humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza.

We are aware that the Commission has taken certain measures in relation to Israel's participation in the Horizon Europe research programme that must be adopted as a matter of urgency. However, these steps fall far short of the comprehensive and decisive action required in the face of breaches of international humanitarian law and widespread civilian suffering. Limited measures in the realm of research cooperation are not commensurate with the gravity of the situation on the ground in Gaza, nor do they reflect the scale of Israeli's government non-compliance with the human rights obligations enshrined in EU-Israel Association Agreement.

We recall that the International Criminal Court has stated that the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is a war crime. In this context, the European Union's legal and moral responsibility to act has never been more urgent.

The time for warnings and statements is long gone, the EU must take decisive and immediate action.

We therefore call on the European Commission to:

- Act on its own assessment and findings of violations, and advance immediate sanctions, including the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, considering Article 2 of the Agreement, which conditions cooperation on the respect for human rights and democratic principles;
- End all trade and economic relations with Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. These settlements are illegal under international law, as reaffirmed by

numerous UN resolutions. The EU must enforce a ban on the import of goods and services originating from these settlements and on export to such territories, ensuring that European markets are not complicit in the violation of Palestinian rights and the ongoing annexation of land.

As representatives of working people we call on the EU to take these steps and to use all measures to push for a just and lasting resolution to the conflict, based on a two State solution and grounded in international law and the principles of peace, justice, and equality. We condemn forced displacement and we join the calls for the release of all hostages.

Israeli civilians and Palestinian civilians, have the right to safety, dignity, and freedom from violence.

We also express our strong condemnation for the recent announcement by the Israeli government of an additional large-scale military operation to take control of the Gaza Strip. We call on the EU to take urgent initiatives to put pressure on the Israeli government against such operation. Any steps or attempts at annexation or of settlement extension violate international law.

We urge the Commission to take these immediate steps in accordance with EU law, international humanitarian law, and the shared values that underpin the European project.

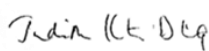
Best regards,

Esther Lynch



ETUC
General Secretary

Judith Kirton-Darling



industriAll Europe
General Secretary

Jan Willem Goudriaan



EPSU
General Secretary

Jelmer Evers



ETUCE
European Director

Oliver Roethig



UNI Europa
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Livia Spera



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