



EUROPEAN JEWS  
FOR A JUST PEACE

European Jews for a just Peace

P.O. Box 59506 1040 LA Amsterdam The Netherlands

Dear Member of European Parliament

At the European Council meeting on 19-20 June, I understand that EU heads of state will consider upgrading political and economic ties with Israel under the EU's Euro-Med programme. I am writing to you on behalf of European Jews for a Just Peace, to request that you make the strongest representations possible to the EU governments that such an upgrade is deeply inappropriate at this time.

EU officials have emphasised that the importance of maintaining close relations with Israel, at a time when Israel is occupying or blockading Palestinian Territory, is to encourage Israel to adhere more closely to European norms of behaviour with respect to human rights, democracy and international law. This policy has failed.

The Barcelona Declaration governing the EuroMed process – signed by then Prime Minister, now Defence Minister Ehud Barak - commits signatories to:

*“act in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other obligations under international law...  
...develop the rule of law and democracy in their political systems...  
respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and guarantee the effective legitimate exercise of such rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression, freedom of association for peaceful purposes...”*

Israel is known to contravene international law, most obviously through the collective punishment of the population of Gaza, so described by External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner in January this year. Less widely known are the many instances where it shows contempt for the rules of its own laws. I have appended some instances for your information.

The intention to promote European values through closer economic, political and cultural ties is noble in principle. In practice, Israel shows no respect for the agreements it has already signed. Now is not the time for the EU to upgrade relations with Israel.

I would be grateful if you would convey these concerns to your foreign minister and let me know their response.

Yours sincerely

Dan Judelson  
Secretary  
European Jews for a Just Peace  
June, 12th 2008



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## **Israel, international and domestic law**

### Gaza

Israel contravenes international law, most obviously through its blockade of Gaza. Despite grave concerns about disease and nutrition, Ehud Barak proclaimed earlier this year that no food, fuel or medical supplies would cross into Gaza without his authorisation. As Israeli defence minister, there cannot be a much clearer indication that the blockade of Gaza is a military siege. Furthermore, in the June 6th editions of Ha'aretz and The Jerusalem Post he declared that an Israeli invasion of Gaza was now closer than ever – and, specifically – *that it would precede any ceasefire currently being mediated by Egyptian diplomats*. His justification for this was that Hamas had to be taught that there was a price to pay.

This behaviour is not statesmanlike, from a man who wishes to be Prime Minister of his country, nor who signed a document such as the Barcelona Declaration, committing his country to observance of human rights and democracy in the hope of closer relations with the EU.

The Israeli Navy also restricts Gazan fishermen accessing fishing grounds to which they are entitled under the Paris Protocols, part of the 1993 Oslo agreement. Gazans are entitled to fish up to 20 miles off the coast of Gaza. In 2002, the Israeli's, without consultation with the Palestinians cut that limit to 12 miles (the Bertini line) and in practice, on the occasions where the Gazan fishing fleet is allowed out at all, keeps them to a 6 mile limit.

### West Bank Settlements

Israel's policies in the occupied territories violate the EU's human rights protocols in fundamental ways. The most obvious violation, from which the rest follow, is the expansion of the settlements, which violates the prohibition of the Fourth Geneva Convention against an occupying power transferring its own population into occupied land. Far from ceasing settlement expansion since being admitted to the Association Agreement in 2000, Israel has continued expansion apace and continues building new settlement housing and infrastructure to this day.

### **Israeli Breaches of Israeli law**

On 4th September 2007 the Israeli Supreme Court ruled that the route of the Separation Barrier around the Palestinian village of Bil'in should be moved, crucially stating that the security case had not been made and that the route had actually been drawn to accommodate expansion of the (illegal) settlement of Modi'in Illit. To date the Israeli Defence Ministry has not begun to plan a new route of the barrier in this area, citing budget constraints.

On 26 May under the protection of the Israel Army, developers resumed building in contravention of the Supreme Court judgment.

Similar rulings from both the High Court (Alfei Menashe, September 2005) and Supreme Court (Tzofim, May 2006) have been ignored. In a case heard in December 2006 over the route between two settlements south of Hebron (Maccabim & Kiryat Arba) it took both the imposition of a fine and harsh judicial criticism for ignoring the original verdict before the Ministry of Defence obeyed the court and removed a section of the Barrier.

The development of Modi'in Illit has been found to have contravened planning permission granted for the number of units by a factor of 100%. In response, Israeli families who have put down deposits on apartments in the complex rushed to occupy them and change the locks. None of these families has been removed.

*European Jews for a Just Peace is a federation of Jewish Peace groups working and campaigning in 10 European countries.*



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A fifth case is being heard regarding Ofra settlement, near the Palestinian village of Ein Yabrud. A rabbinical judgement has been given for the orthodox settlers to continue building on the Sabbath so that the settlement may be completed and the units occupied before the Supreme Court has time to rule on the case.

### **Demolition of Palestinian Homes**

In the four months following the Annapolis conference, 185 Palestinian structures were demolished. Hundreds of other structures, including schools and Bedouin tents exist under the threat of demolition orders yet to be carried out.

These demolitions fall into three categories:

- to punish the families of Palestinians involved in resisting the Occupation- even though that is collective punishment;
- because they did not have planning permission – even though they were built on land owned by the Palestinians in question,
- to make way for the Separation Barrier, ruled illegal by the International Court of Justice in an opinion which demanded states seek to ensure that they did not collaborate with the construction of the Barrier.

### **Additionally, the Israeli government has:**

- issued tenders for contracts to build another 850 homes in illegal settlements;
- opened the E1 police headquarters, paving the way for yet more housing units in the police HQ's previous location in the Palestinian neighbourhood of Ras al Amud;
- increased the number of checkpoints and impassable roadblocks restricting movement in the West Bank have– despite a commitment from Ehud Barak to remove them in order to relieve the “life fabric” of West Bank Palestinians.