

EU Statement - HRC58 - Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's Report on Occupied Palestinian Territory

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United Nations Human Rights Council

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Interactive Dialogue on High Commissioner's report on Occupied Palestinian Territory

26 February 2025

EU Statement

Mister High Commissioner,

We thank you and your Office for your work in upholding human rights and defending international human rights law. We reiterate our support to your mandate and its independence.

We support your call to pursue independent investigation, accountability and justice for any grave violations and abuses, as stated in your report.

The EU has warmly welcomed the ceasefire agreement in Gaza. It is vital that the deal is fully implemented to allow all the hostages to be released, ending their terrible ordeal that has lasted for more than 15 months, and to ensure a permanent end to hostilities and ease the humanitarian suffering in Gaza.

Regarding the situation in Gaza, the EU deeply deplores the unacceptable number of civilians, especially women and children, who have lost their lives, and the catastrophic humanitarian situation notably caused by the insufficient entry of aid into Gaza, in particular in the North. Displaced Gazans should be ensured a safe and dignified return to their homes in Gaza. The EU recalls the need to fully implement the International Court of Justice orders, which are legally binding. While welcoming the increase of aid entering Gaza since

the ceasefire entered into force, the EU reiterates its calls for full and unimpeded access for humanitarian aid to the Gaza strip and that aid can be effectively distributed to those in need, including by UN agencies and notably UNRWA.

The EU reiterates its condemnation in the strongest terms of the brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks conducted by Hamas and other terrorist groups against Israel on 7 October 2023, which included sexual and gender-based violence, and calls for an immediate and dignified release of all hostages. The EU will continue to stand with the families of the victims and the hostages taken by Hamas.

In exercising its right to defend itself, Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, in all circumstances.

The EU reiterates its strong opposition to Israel's settlement policy and activities, including in and around East Jerusalem. The EU strongly opposes all actions that undermine the viability of the two-state solution. The EU strongly condemns the further escalation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, following increased settler violence, the expansion of illegal settlements, Israeli military operations and increased terrorist attacks against Israel. Israel must do more to prevent settler violence and perpetrators must be held to account. Since 7 October 2023, increased access restrictions by Israel in the West Bank have gravely impacted socioeconomic conditions for Palestinians, and the EU calls on Israel to allow for a tangible improvement of freedom of movement and access for the Palestinians. The EU recalls UNSC resolution 2735 rejecting any attempt at demographic or territorial changes in the Gaza Strip and stressing the importance of unifying the Gaza Strip with the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority.

The EU reiterates its call on Israel to cooperate fully with the United Nations, including human rights mechanisms, and to facilitate access for UN mandate holders, including in relation to the issuance of visas for international staff.

The EU and its Member states call on all parties to grant the ICRC unhindered access to places of detention and to the hostages, in line with their obligations under international humanitarian law.

The EU will remain committed to a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the two-State solution. The EU underlines the vital role of civil society in promoting dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians around human rights, peace and a comprehensive and just solution of the conflict. The EU hopes that cooperation with civil society will remain unhampered in the future.

