

SOEMOED Vlaanderen

صمود

To the Members of the European Parliament endorsing the exclusion of Israeli settlements from European Cooperation

Dear Member of the European Parliament,
Dear Madam, Sir,

We received a copy of the letter dated November 20th 2013, addressed to Lady Ashton, Foreign Secretary of the EU.

You were one of the subscribers of this appeal to see to it that European policy is enforced concerning the settlements in Palestinian territory.

We thank you for this appeal, the more so because from Israel increasingly more settlements are currently being built and planned in Eastern Jerusalem as well as deep into the West Bank. This continuous erosion of the Palestinian territory is a sustained violation of international law and makes a two-state solution practically impossible.

From the base, in the US as in Europe, there are now increasing protests against this policy of Israel. It is important to stress that even Jewish base organizations like J Street and Jewish Voice for Peace are supporting these actions.

We ask you to keep reminding the High Commissioner Mrs. Ashton, and the Members of the European Commission and Administration, of their responsibility for the enforcement of international law.

As articles in the Israeli press point out, it is the actions of the State of Israel that form the most important obstacle to giving the country a safe and just place in the world community.

It requires courage for Europeans to draw attention to Israel's violation of human rights, against its own Arabic population and against the inhabitants of the Palestinian territories. However, the guilt-ridden memory of the persecution and extermination of Jews in Europe should inspire Europeans to be greatly concerned with the rights of threatened groups of people even in this conflict.

Europe cannot step aside. We demand you now to see to it that the European Union in the ongoing peace talks will adjust the American resolution so that a fair agreement should become possible without obligation for the Palestinian leaders to give up fundamental rights.

An unbalanced agreement will not advance but jeopardize peace. On other levels too the urgent and unremitting vigilance of the European Parliament will be required.

Our special attention was drawn to the blatant recent attacks on Palestinian civil initiatives for solidarity and human rights. We wish to point you to an appeal by **Addameer** calling the IDF to account for their raid on this organization, destroying it, and for inflicting major injuries and detention on its staff members. Please refer to their press release of Feb. 25, 2014 in attachment to this email.

These incidents make the life of the Palestinian population impossible; they undermine the chances of peace and carry the seeds of violence on a broader scale.

We want to explicitly thank you again for your focus on human rights in the Middle East, especially Israel and Palestine.

Respectfully yours,

Marcel Deprins, Frans Swartelé, Ella Bormans, Jan Engelen, Leni Creuwels
Members of Soemoed Vlaanderen

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