



The European Union will reexamine their association agreement with Israel: An important step forward which must be completed

Resolution adopted at the Executive Committee Meeting 21 May 2025

The European Foreign Affairs Council on May 20 decided to review Article 2 of its Association Agreement with Israel in view of the serious violations of humanitarian law in Gaza. The ETUC, meeting in Belgrade today, is calling on the European Commission to take appropriate measures once the review of the agreement has been completed.

This decision comes against a backdrop of Israel's devastation of the Gaza Strip, resulting in deaths and destruction of infrastructure and buildings, and ongoing talks to deport the Gazan population. Article 2 states that "respect for human rights and democratic principles is an essential condition of the agreement".

We welcome this decision which is in line with our resolution on EU trade with Israel and Palestine and calls on the European Commission and the European External Action Service, responsible for verifying the compatibility of Benjamin Netanyahu's government policies with respect for fundamental rights, to propose sanctions including the suspension of the agreement.

The EU must urgently act on the situation unfolding in Gaza and occupied Palestine. Acknowledging that a strong majority of European foreign ministers are in favour of re-examining compliance with Article 2 of the agreement is not enough, we urge the European Commission to bring this process to a conclusion, without yielding to the pressures that will seek to derail it.

The ETUC points out that trade measures require qualified majority voting, so national vetoes cannot stop the process. There is sufficient evidence by reliable international sources for the EU to conclude that article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement is being violated.

The ETUC reiterates its call for an immediate and permanent cease-fire towards a negotiated agreement between Israel and Palestine that results in a lasting and peaceful "two-state" solution, the opening of borders for humanitarian aid and full respect for international law. We condemn forced displacement and we join the calls for the release of all hostages.

The ETUC condemns all human rights violations across the world and stands in solidarity with workers and trade unions in all conflict areas. The ETUC and its affiliates will continue to pursue social justice and respect for international law as the basis for just and lasting peace.

