EUROPEAN ELECTIONS
7 JUNE 2024

The EU's selective application of International law is a terrible injustice.



USE YOUR VOTE FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE



THIS IS WHY PALESTINE MUST BE AN ELECTION ISSUE

We have all seen the horror of what is happening in Gaza. Over 35,000 people killed, mainly women and children, 1.5 million displaced – many of them several times, and little or no medical services available for the over 80,000 who have been severely injured. Hospitals destroyed. Doctors kidnapped and then murdered in Israeli prisons. There is an acute shortage of food, water, medicines and fuel. Tens of thousands are at the point of starvation.

Here in Ireland people have regularly come out in their thousands to protest at what is happening in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem. People from all walks of life are demanding that Ireland does more to put pressure on Israel.

Irish people understand and empathise with people in Palestine who have lost their right to self-determination, who are subjected to apartheid laws and who have little access to redress when their land and property is confiscated.

People expect their public representatives to reflect this concern.
As a result, we expect that all those running for positions of public representation will reflect the wishes of their constituents.
Among the issues which we're asking our representatives to address, is the following:

Israeli Apartheid

For decades Israel has subjected the Palestinian people as a whole to an institutionalised regime of domination and discrimination amounting to the crime of apartheid as defined in international law. Apartheid is a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the United Nations Convention Against Apartheid.

The nature of this discrimination and oppression has been outlined in detail for years by Palestinian human rights organisations and has been more recently identified and described by Israeli and international human rights organisations, as well as by UN bodies and experts.

Recent polling has been carried out by 'Ireland Thinks' for the Irish Anti-Apartheid Campaign for Palestine (IAACP). When asked: "The UN defines apartheid as involving systematic oppression, domination and discrimination by one racial group over another racial group. To what extent do you think this applies to the situation facing Palestinians?", 71% agreed.
So demand that your MEP challenges the EU's complicity on Israeli apartheid.

When broken down by political party support, all parties in Government had a majority in agreement, with 85% of Green Party, 71% of Fianna Fáil, and 56% of Fine Gael supporters agreeing with this statement. Among opposition parties, 100% of Solidarity PBP, 90% of Labour, 86% of Social Democrats, 80% of Sinn Féin, and 41% of Aontú supporters agreed.
Ireland has a proud history of challenging apartheid in South Africa and Namibia. The

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rich vein of individual activism, public advocacy, and political action in Ireland in the 1980s was very successful in drawing international attention to the situation there that ultimately helped bring about an end to the South African apartheid regime.

Demand:

Ireland's representatives should take action in accordance with international law to recognise that the crime of apartheid is being committed against Palestinians. If we want to ensure accountability and ultimately end ongoing human rights violations against Palestinians and ensure that their right to self-determination is respected, it is important to recognise the structural root causes of such injustice.

An EU Ban on Trade with Illegal Israeli Settlements

All Israeli settlements in occupied Palestinian territories are illegal under international law. By allowing Member States to engage trade in goods and services with these settlements, the EU is failing in its legally obligated duty not to render any aid or assistance to violations of international law.

The settlements are a vital part of the infrastructure of Israel's regime of apartheid that steal Palestinian land, implant a settler population in the region, and illegally extract resources from that land. The maintenance of these settlements is a vital part of Israel's strategy of permanent subjugation of the Palestinian people.

Every year, EU states collectively import products worth somewhere between €175 million and €350 million from Israeli settlements. Many corporate entities headquartered, or with significant presences, in EU member states are involved in projects that help maintain the settlements. Many others invest in, underwrite, or otherwise finance, such entities, creating a chain of complicity with international law violations.

Demand:

We are calling for the EU to ban all trade in goods and services with Israel's illegal settlements, and calling on prospective MEPs to commit to working towards this goal if elected. Legislative instruments such as the Occupied Territories Bill (2018) are available as a way to effect this as rapidly as possible.

Economic, political and cultural relations, and in particular the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

The EU is Israel's biggest trade partner. Over 30% of Israel's imports come from the EU, while over one quarter of its exports are to European countries.

This is in large part due to the very favourable terms offered to Israel through the EU-Israel Association Agreement which provides for preferential or no tariffs on goods imported from Israel. Article 2 of the Agreement stipulates that "…all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement." (https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX%3A22000A0621%2801%29)

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However, this clear principle has not led to any action by either the EU or any member state, despite an almost universal agreement among EU members that Israel's current actions in Gaza constitute gross violations of human rights up to, and most probably including, ethnic cleansing, forced displacement and collective punishment.

Ireland has joined with Spain to request a Review of the Agreement, but to date no clear recommendation of this has been arrived at.

Demand:

This is an issue which needs to be vigorously pursued in the first session of the new European Parliament after June 2024.

The cessation of trade in all military and related products and services between the EU and EU member states and Israel.

While the major share of military assistance to Israel is from the US, Germany has accounted for up to 30% of Israel's armaments imports and other EU countries including UK, Italy, Romania and France have also exported substantial amounts to Israel in recent years.
Faced with growing evidence of systemic killing and destruction of infrastructure across Gaza, there is increasing unease across Europe that such trade amounts to complicity with the crime of Genocide.

Setting an important precedent, on 12th February 2024 a Court in the Netherlands recognised that the export of parts for the F-35 fighter jets to Israel do violate international law and have ordered that such trade should cease immediately. In addition, since 7th October 2023, Spain has suspended arms sales and exports to Israel, while Italy and the Belgian regional government of Wallonia have suspended the issuing of export licenses for weapons sales to Israel.

Demand:

We call on our public representatives to support the EU's cessation of trading in military equipment to Israel.

Provision of Humanitarian Assistance.

Shortly after the Nakba (catastrophe) of 1948 when over 15,000 Palestinians were killed and more than 750,000 were driven out of their homes and land, the United Nations formed UNRWA (The United Nations Relief and Works Agency), to provide assistance to those who were dispossessed and, in many cases, forced to flee to neighbouring countries.
Today, more than 5 million Palestinians throughout the Middle East remain without the means to support themselves and are dependent of the assistance provided by UNRWA. In the case of Gaza, where a normal economy has been unable to function due to the 16 years of blockade, UNRWA provides essential supplies of food and medicines and is responsible for many of the vital services such as schools and health centres.

Recognising the importance of these services to the Palestinian population, Israel has long expressed a desire to discredit and dismantle UNWRA. Earlier this year,

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Israel succeeded in destabilizing the organisation's relationship with several of its funding sources, claiming that 12 members of UNWRA staff were involved in the 7th October attack on Israel. This led to an immediate suspension of funding by 13 major contributors. However, despite repeated requests, to date Israel has failed to substantiate these claims with any concrete evidence. Given this, the EU and 8 countries (Canada, Australia, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Germany, France, and Japan) have now reinstated their assistance, while Ireland, Belgium and Spain did not suspend funding pledges and Ireland has, in fact, increased its pledges to €20 million.

We must now convince our European partners of the urgency to do likewise. Given the gravity of the situation and the threat of imminent famine, this is now critical. Close to 1.9 displaced people in Gaza are almost entirely dependent on UNRWA assistance.

Meanwhile, once the bombing stops, Palestine is going to require substantial assistance to rebuild and to sustain a population whose already weak economy has now completely collapsed.

Under the rules of occupation, it should be Israel's responsibility to take care of the population of the land it is occupying, but to date we have seen that this has not been the case.
Significant investment in infrastructure, funded by the European Union and its member states has been destroyed by the unrelenting bombing and destruction carried out by the Israeli Defence Forces.

Will Europe now stand up and demand reparations and restoration for this?

Meanwhile, at the very least, our representatives must insist on the collaboration of Israel to facilitate all endeavours to deliver humanitarian assistance and undertake the reconstruction of the homes and civil spaces of the 2.3 million people of Gaza, in addition to that which has been destroyed by the increasingly violent raids in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Demand:

Our representatives in Europe must raise the issue of Israel's responsibility under international law to provide for the wellbeing of the population on the lands it is occupying. Meanwhile, there is a substantial amount of European-funded infrastructure which has been destroyed and for which Israel should be held to account. Finally, European countries will be called upon to guarantee a substantial flow of humanitarian aid in the coming months.

This document has been prepared by:
THE IRISH ANTI-APARTHEID CAMPAIGN FOR PALESTINE (IAACP)
The Irish Anti-Apartheid Campaign for Palestine was founded in 2023 to build political support for effective measures by Ireland and the international community to condemn Israel's actions and to end the crime of apartheid against Palestinians. Through shared actions, campaigns and advocacy initiatives the group has pledged to engage members of the Irish public and political representatives on the situation of Palestinians in Israel, in the Occupied Palestinian territories and East Jerusalem, in Gaza and those who form the diaspora in neighbouring or other lands. There are currently 25 member organisations including Amnesty International, Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Trocaire, the Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Jews for Palestine and Sadaka, the Ireland Palestine Alliance.

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