

# Ending European complicity in Israel's violations of Palestinian workers' rights

Barcelona – Aula Magna Universitat de Barcelona, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2018

Conference summary report



Tom Moerenhout, researcher at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva (left), Mark Beacon, UNISON and member of the European Trade Union Initiative for Justice in Palestine (ETUN) steering committee, Tareq Sadeq, researcher at Birzeit University, Palestine. FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

## Introduction

On 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2018 over 70 delegates, from a wide range of European trade union organisations, gathered to discuss how they could work together to **bring an end to the complicity** of the European Union, European governments and companies in the illegal occupation of Palestine. One of the main objectives was to highlight how the all-pervasive nature of the occupation impacts on the Palestinian economy and on the lives of Palestinians, including the impossibility of being able to access decent work. A common campaign strategy for the European trade union movement was discussed, including **coordination** and **joint work** to tackle European and corporate complicity, as well as **the strengthening of ties** between the European and Palestinian trade union movement.

During the two day-seminar we heard from a wide range of European trade union representatives, legal experts, researchers and campaigners about the urgent need to challenge and bring about an end to European complicity with Israeli violations of Palestinian workers' rights.

This report summarises the various presentations, workshops and discussions that took place over the two day period. More detail about the presentations and the reports will be available on our website.

The European Trade Union Initiative for Justice in Palestine is a coalition of 35 European trade union organisations representing more than 6 million workers.

## Background

As European trade unionists we are alarmed that despite the clear injustice inflicted on the people of Palestine and especially at a time when over 130 Palestinians have been killed and thousands injured by Israeli soldiers during weekly protests of Great March of Return at the Gaza fence by Israeli snipers, the European states, the European Union (EU) and representative institutions have failed to fulfil their legal duty to hold Israel accountable for its grave violations of international law.

The failure of the international community to take action to ensure that Israel complies with international law has allowed Israel to continue its countless attacks on Palestinian civilians with complete impunity, including the recent killings of Palestinians in Gaza. Human Rights Watch has condemned these killings as «unlawful» and «calculated».

While the EU criticizes some aspects of Israel's policies, they continue to provide it with political, economic and military support, as well as the political cover it needs to maintain such an inhumane occupation. We believe that as trade unionists and conscious citizens of this world, we have a duty and the power to act. We believe it is time for us to collectively stand in solidarity with the Palestinian labour movement, to develop strategies for holding our governments and the EU as a representative body accountable, and to put pressure on corporations to end their complicity with Israel's violations of Palestinian workers' rights.

The impact of the occupation of Palestine on workers' rights is well documented:

- The apartheid wall snakes its way across the West Bank and separates Palestinians from their workplaces and their land
- The settlement colonies, checkpoints, obstacles and settler only roads deny freedom of movement to workers, forcing them to travel long distances, if they can travel at all
- The blockade of Gaza, control of the West Bank's borders, fragmentation and restrictions in East Jerusalem, and the destruction and theft of Palestinian property, prevent or reduce trade and the ability to create jobs, and creates a total economic dependency on Israel.

Moreover, that dependency allows Israel to undermine Palestinian producers by flooding their markets with Israeli goods. The unemployment this causes allows Israel to use Palestinians as a cheap source of labour in the settlements, industrial zones, agricultural settlements and in Israel, using defunct Jordanian laws, sub-contractors, middlemen, and low pay to keep costs low and profits high.

In short, the Israeli government is using the occupation to undermine the four key elements of decent work by:

- preventing the development of decent and productive employment
- denying access to social protection
- ignoring core labour standards
- and denying freedom of association

**However, Israel cannot maintain an occupation on this grand scale on its own. It requires the complicity of governments, corporations and the EU.**

In order to highlight the impact of this, and the impossibility of the UN Sustainable Development Goals being achieved in Palestine under these conditions, particularly regarding Decent Work, we commissioned research from Birzeit University. The progress of this research and the initial

conclusions were presented at the conference. Whilst much is known about European complicity in a general sense, and about the impact of the occupation on Palestinian livelihoods, this is the first time anyone has addressed how European complicity is actively undermining workers' rights, and decent work for Palestinians. By focusing on workers' rights we can add significant value to the debate on European complicity, particularly for the trade union movement.

## European Complicity – Undermining decent work in Palestine

During this session, Tareq Sadeq, a member of the research team from Birzeit University, presented the initial findings about the impoverishment of the Palestinian economy due to the occupation, and European complicity in this and in Israel's violations of Palestinian workers' rights. A copy of the report will be available here and on our website. In summary:



Tareq Sadeq.

FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

### Decent Work

The UN International Labour Organisation's Decent Work Agenda focuses on four strategic goals which are essential for sustainable growth, more and better jobs and social cohesion:

- Creating decent and productive employment
- Access to social protection systems
- Respect for core labour standards
- Stronger dialogue between the social partners

In 2015 world leaders, including European governments and Israel, unanimously agreed the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to succeed the Millennium Development Goals. Decent work is a key element of Goal 8 to «promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all».

Israel has also ratified all eight International Labour Organisation core conventions, covering the minimum enabling rights people need to defend and improve their rights and conditions at work, including:

- Freedom from forced labour
- Freedom from child labour
- Freedom from discrimination
- Freedom to form and join a union, and to bargain collectively

The Israeli government has a responsibility to ensure that these legally binding international treaties apply equally to Palestinian, Israeli and migrant workers.

### **Israel is in breach of all these core conventions.**

It should be noted that the Palestinian economy is entirely dependent on Israel. Palestine has no control over its own borders and suffers major restrictions on trade, access to resources including tax revenues and the movement of people. Trade with other countries requires the permission of the Israeli authorities, which controls the sea and airports, in addition to the borders with Jordan and Egypt.

The control and appropriation of Palestinian resources, the prevention of economic development and ensuring high levels of unemployment has caused deep impoverishment for the Palestinian people. It has also created a source of cheap labour for Israeli employers in the settlements and in Israel itself.

Approximately 52,000 Palestinians have permits to work in Israel. Many queue as early as 3am to get through one of the 26 checkpoints between Israel and the West Bank, and crossing can take up to three hours. Even documented Palestinian workers are often exploited by labour brokers, which take a significant proportion of pay. A further 30,000 Palestinians work in Israel without a permit. They take enormous risks to find work and are often exploited by unscrupulous employers. Israel has regularly prevented Palestinian workers from the West Bank from entering Israel, subjecting them to a loss of income.

(The checkpoints are reliant on European technology to monitor the movement of Palestinians between the occupied West Bank and Israel).

## **EU complicity in Israeli violations of Palestinian workers' rights**

**Ignoring its legal obligations:** Below we elaborate on how the EU – and each of the individual member states – have an obligation under international law to stop assisting Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights.

**Ignoring the human rights clause in the EU-Israel Association Agreement:** At the most basic level the EU pays no regard to Article 2 which stipulates that 'Relations between the Parties...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'. There is overwhelming evidence, including in numerous reports by EU bodies, that Israel is responsible for severe and persistent breaches of the fundamental human rights of Palestinians.

When Russia annexed Crimea and Sevastopol in 2014, the EU swiftly deemed these annexations illegal, and applied its own laws and international law to halt Russian imports from the illegally annexed regions. This EU import ban underscores the EU's inconsistency and double-standard in not similarly banning imports from illegal Israeli settlements located in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

**Facilitating trade with illegal settlements:** Since 2000 and the signing of the EU Israel Association Agreement, the EU has allowed most Israeli goods to enter its markets on a tax free basis, excluding West Bank produce from the Israeli settlements. Since 2015 the EU has required settlement goods to be labelled as such, but implementation has proved almost impossible as the Israeli government adopted a seven digit coding system in 2013, making it virtually impossible to differentiate between goods produced in the settlements and in Israel.

**Facilitating corporate complicity and EU companies profiting from the occupation:** In the section below on corporate complicity we highlight the multiple ways in which, with the support of the EU, European companies benefit from and help maintain the illegal occupation.

**Promotion of Israel as a normal and democratic state:** The long established and close diplomatic and trading relationship between the EU and Israel, despite decades of human rights abuses and infringements of international law, has allowed these practices to be normalised. The political cover that this provides has allowed illegal Israeli practices to be maintained and escalated eg, in the attacks on Gaza, the slaughter of civilian protesters, the massive increase in settlement building, etc.

**Israeli participation in Horizon 2020:** Allowing Israel to participate as a partner in its research and development programme Horizon 2020 has allowed Israel to have privileged access to the various programmes. More than 200 projects with Israeli companies have been approved. Israel has benefited extensively from EU subsidies for the development of Israeli technology, including dual use technology that can be used for military purposes, thus supporting the Israeli arms industry.

Example 1 – **Elbit and Israeli Aerospace Industries**, two main suppliers of military use drones and weapons, and both deeply complicit in Israeli war crimes, have both benefited substantially from financial and other support from the EU Framework Programmes.

Example 3 – **Technion University**, a main hub for developing Israeli weapons systems, has benefited from EU subsidies.

Example 2 – The Israeli water company **Mekorot** controls 82 percent of water in the occupied West Bank, the majority of which is used by Israel and the illegal settlements. Approximately 50 per cent of the water used by Palestinians is purchased back from Mekorot. Settlers are permitted to dig deep wells, whereas Palestinians are limited to a maximum depth of 30m. This has resulted in the further deterioration of Palestinian agricultural sector. Despite its involvement in the exploitation of Palestinian resources, Mekorot is permitted to participate in, and access funding through, the EU's Horizon 2020 and FP7 programmes.

## Corporate Complicity

The sessions on corporate complicity included presentations from trade unionists and campaigners among them Michael Deas, Hugh Lanning from Palestine Solidarity Campaign UK, Paul Glover from UNISON UK and Verveine Angeli from Solidaires.

As indicated below numerous European companies are involved in the destruction of Palestinian property and the construction and maintenance of the Israeli infrastructure which restricts Palestinian freedom of movement. Private European businesses, facilitated by the EU, play a major role in funding, facilitating and supporting Israeli violations of international law and illegal Israeli settlements in a number of ways.



Michael Deas, formerly a campaigns officer with the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC), Paul Glover, UNISON UK, member of ETUN steering committee and Vereine Angeli, L'Union syndicale Solidaires, member of ETUN steering committee.

FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

### Expropriation and demolition of Palestinian property

Since 1967 Palestinians in the West Bank have lost access to more than 60 percent of land and two thirds of grazing land. Families in area C are particularly vulnerable. In 2016 the Israeli government was responsible for the demolition or seizure of 1,093 Palestinian homes and structures in East Jerusalem and Area C. At the beginning of 2017 there were 12,500 outstanding demolition orders. Most structures are demolished due to the lack of a building permit, something that is almost impossible for a Palestinian to obtain. These demolitions undermine the Palestinian right to decent work by destroying workers' means to a livelihood.

Some companies like Soda Stream and its new factory are actively complicit in Israel's policy of displacing the indigenous Bedouin-Palestinian citizens of Israel in the Naqab (Negev).<sup>1</sup> SodaStream's mistreatment of and discrimination against Palestinian workers is not forgotten either.

Many of the demolitions rely on European manufactured engineering equipment from companies including **JCB, CNH Industrial, Liebherr International and Volvo**, obtained under the preferential arrangements of the EU Israel Association Agreement. The Swedish Volvo Group and British firm JCB supply bulldozers and earth moving vehicles to Israel that are used by the Israeli government to demolish Palestinian homes, including in East Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> According to the EU External Action Service the Israeli government demolished or seized 117 structures funded by the EU or EU Member States to the value of €311,692, including homes, animal shelters, latrines, water networks, and agricultural and livelihood assets, in Area C and East Jerusalem, between September 2016 and February 2017.

1 <https://bdsmovement.net/news/%E2%80%99Csodastream-still-subject-boycott%E2%80%99D>

2 <http://www.whoprofits.org/company/volvo-group>

### Providing the military and technological infrastructure of colonisation and facilitating the existence of illegal settlements.

- The checkpoints are reliant on European technology to monitor the movement of Palestinians between the occupied West Bank and Israel. British security company **G4S** provided security services and equipment to Israeli checkpoints, Israel's illegal separation wall and private businesses in illegal Israeli settlements, including in East Jerusalem. The company also helped Israel to operate prisons at which Palestinians, including children, are held without trial and subjected to torture.<sup>3</sup>
- **Due to a successful campaign in December 2016, the company was sold to the Israeli equity fund, FIMI, which currently holds 100% of the company's shares. Hewlett Packard (HP)**, its subsidiaries and associated companies are notorious for their longstanding involvement in grave violations of international law such as the provision of services to illegal Israeli settlements and the supply of technologies of surveillance and control used in the commission of forced population transfer in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). HP provides and maintains the computer systems for the check points and the ID card system that are at the heart of Israel's systematic discrimination against Palestinians. HP also provides equipment to the Israeli navy that maintain the siege on Gaza. It should be noted that a number of UK and Irish unions have either removed or are working to remove HP technology from their own offices.<sup>4</sup>
- **Italian company Pizzarotti and Swedish firm Atlas Copco** are both involved in the construction of the illegal Israeli A1 rail project, which passes through occupied Palestinian territory and is causing displacement of Palestinians.<sup>5</sup> **The French company Alstom** remains involved in the Jerusalem Light Rail, which connects Jerusalem and the illegal settlements to the east, linking those settlements to Israel and facilitating the colonisation of Palestinian land.

### Importing and selling goods produced by companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements

- European businesses also support illegal Israeli settlements by importing and selling goods from companies operating in them. Many major European retailers import produce from companies operating in illegal Israeli settlements such as **Mehadrin**, and **Ahava**. Israeli export companies such as Mehadrin play a key role in the appropriation of Palestinian land, water and other natural resources. Many illegal Israeli settlements, especially in the Jordan Valley area, are only economically viable because the businesses that operate in them are able to export to European markets.
- Many Israeli exporters, including Mehadrin, and Ahava have been proven to routinely mislead retailers and consumers about the true origin of goods manufactured in illegal Israeli settlements, making accurate labelling of Israeli products unworkable.

### Investing in settlement companies and projects

Many European banks hold shares and provide loans to companies based or operating in illegal Israeli settlements. For example, **UK bank Barclays** holds a significant stake in British Israel Investments, a real estate company that owns extensive amounts of property in illegal Israeli settlements.

3 [www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=460](http://www.addameer.org/etemplate.php?id=460)

4 <https://whoprofits.org/company/hewlett-packard-enterprise-hpe/>

5 <http://www.whoprofits.org/company/impresa-pizzarotti-c>

In the UK, people are campaigning against **HSBC** because the company is heavily invested in companies that sell weapons to Israel. In France there's a growing campaign against the pension fund AXA for similar reasons.

A major area of complicity is the degree to which western companies and pension fund holders participate in Israel's oppression of Palestinians is through their investments in complicit corporations.

The UN human rights council adopted a motion establishing a database of companies operating in illegal settlements. Approximately 150 complicit companies have now been identified, though the UN to date has withheld publication of this list.

### **Military and security support**

Israel is only able to carry out regular massacres, and to maintain its daily human rights violations, because of the military cooperation and arms trade it maintains with complicit governments and companies around the world. This cooperation really takes four forms: exports of weapons to Israel, imports from Israel, joint training and joint research. Between 2012 and 2016, European countries have sold weapons to Israel worth €3.3bn. Almost half of that is from Germany, mainly a set of nuclear submarines. Without doubt: Israel's recent war crimes in Gaza were carried out using weapons imported with approval of our governments.

Israeli military companies routinely boast that their technology is «field tested», by which they mean they are tested on the bodies of Palestinians.

In 2013 the UK government reported that they had sold arms valued at \$12.1 billion to Israel. Arms sales from Israel to the EU have also increased in recent years. Both **Israeli Aerospace Industries and Israeli arms developer Elbit Systems** have received EU funding, Elbit as part of the Horizon 2020 programme.

Since 2007, Israeli weapons companies Elbit Systems and Israeli Aerospace Industries (IAI) were awarded \$313.6 million through participation in EU funded research projects. Elbit and IAI are the two main providers of drones used by the Israeli military to commit deliberate attacks on Palestinian civilians.

Israel is the world's leading exporter of drone technology. Drones that were first tested on Palestinians in Gaza have been exported across Europe, including to UK, France, Germany, Croatia Cyprus and Ireland.



Tom Moerenhout.

FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

## **Legal Obligation of EU & EU Member States to Stop Trade with illegal Israeli settlements**

*«No State shall recognize as lawful a situation created by a serious breach within the meaning of article 40, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation.»<sup>6</sup>*

**Tom Moerenhout from the Geneva Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies** explained that Israel's ongoing construction of illegal settlements on Palestinian land violates cardinal rules of international law like prohibit seizing of territory by force, forbid apartheid and population transfer as well as the right to self-determination. He emphasised that under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Israeli settlement construction may amount to war crimes.

The legal conclusion that trade with Israeli settlements violates international law is supported by a vast community of international lawyers, including two former UN Special Rapporteurs, ad hoc judges to the International Court of Justice, a former president and members of the International Law Commission (the key UN body concerned with the development of international law).

In the last few years, this vast legal community has refined its arguments and published an open letter calling on the EU and its Member States to comply with their international legal obligation to withhold from trading with Israeli settlements.

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Art 41 of the ILC Articles on Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts



Ana Sanchez, BDS Committee and Alys Samson Estapé, Europe BDS Campaigns Coordinator facilitated one of the workshops on European complicity. FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

In 2013, public pressure and lobbying by Palestinian and European organizations led the EU to introduce a policy against providing funding for or allowing Israeli participation in EU projects, if such projects or participation effectively recognizes Israeli sovereignty over occupied Palestinian and Syrian territory.

However, the EU continues to trade with illegal Israeli settlements and provides funding to Israeli companies complicit in them through the EU Research Program called Horizon 2020. Stopping trade with Israeli settlements in Palestinian Occupied Territory is long overdue, and the EU's continual failure to end this trade constitutes a hypocritical violation of its obligations under its own laws and under international law. EU trade with illegal Israeli settlements bolsters the settlement enterprise and helps it to survive and develop. States have a duty to not recognize the illegal settlements and to stop assisting Israeli violations of Palestinian rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This obligation was explicitly recognized by the International Court of Justice in its legal opinion on The Wall and its content recalled in UN Resolution 2334. Banning trade with settlements is not a sanction – stopping trade is rather a rectification of an error in international economic relations: this trade should have never existed.



Fruitful discussions at the workshops.

FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

## WORKSHOPS – SOLIDARITY IN ACTION

### Workshop I – Corporate Complicity

The workshop addressed a number of examples of corporate complicity with Israel's violations of Palestinian rights and the significant role the European trade union movement can play in holding these corporations accountable. Participants from the different European unions shared examples of how working either within the trade union movement, or with Palestinian solidarity committees on broader civil society platforms, they were able to call companies to account and to end investments in cases of on-going complicity.

It was stressed that these campaigns need to be based on thorough investigative work, that then can take years to come to fruition, and that union activists in the workforce of the complicit company can play a key role. A key principle is to maintain focus, and to broaden the campaign, eg mobilising not just French workers against Orange, but making links with Egypt where Orange had a huge slice of the market.

We have looked and examined ways how to use legal system in order to stop complicity. The legal system is designed in a way to protect multi corporations and companies, there is a need to challenge it on every level and introduce a human rights clause and public responsibility like in the case of Veolia. The example of the EPSU campaign for free access to clean water was an example of the type of campaign that could be promoted.

## Workshop II – Trade Union Solidarity

At this workshop participants pointed out that European governments are not supporting conditions for decent work in Europe in general (Cyprus, Greece, Ireland etc) instead diverting resources into the European Defence Fund. There were many positive recommendations for improving trade union solidarity work on Palestine (see recommendations below). EU complicity should be strongly targeted with clear and coordinated demands for the ending or suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. The importance of building up links with other unions in our own countries, and also internationally was highlighted. The PSI policy on Palestine was highlighted as an example of what can be achieved if we coordinate with other unions in the global sectoral federations.

Proposals were made to establish contacts with the unions involved with customs and handling imports. Examples were given from Norway linking unions and workers in the Oil and Gas Corporation. Trade union delegations were seen as critical, including creating trade union ‘ambassadors’ to mobilise union solidarity activity, and giving presentations to other unions that have limited knowledge of the realities in Palestine. The importance of establishing relations with ETUC and the ILO was highlighted in order to promote more effective policies and actions towards Palestine.

There was a strong message that the European network can help with all of the above, and with the coordination of campaigns, including a single campaign that we can all unite around. It was suggested that the network should be brought into all our activity.



Assumpta Barbens, IAC-CATAC (left), Michael Deas and Sara Bell, Norwegian Union of Municipal and General Employees (Fagforbundet) preparing the notes from the workshop.

FOTO: INGUNN ERIKSEN

## Workshop III – Trade Union Delegations

It was evident from these workshops that there is a wealth of experience of European trade union delegations to Palestine – including from Belgium, Britain, France, Ireland, Spain, Norway – especially Catalonia and the Basque countries. A number of unions have long-standing commitments to this, and some have been engaged in specific solidarity actions such as providing electricity generators, or equipment for solar power. The Norwegian union Fagforbundet has been in the forefront in establishing a cohort of trade union ambassadors from the members of delegations. This is now being replicated in other countries, eg, Ireland where it is organised on a cross union basis.

There was considerable evidence of the value of delegations – that it is one of the most effective ways to influence union policy and activity. Reports and especially video can be an important resource.

Participants referred to the powerful impact of actually witnessing the occupation and the suffering of Palestinians, how this was never truly understood until they went there, that this is ‘life-changing’. It was said that ‘delegations enable us to experience the human dimension and lived reality of Palestinians’, that they ‘breathe life into the solidarity campaign’.

Different unions have different relations with the various Palestinian unions. Some have well-established and positive working relationships with the PGFTU. Others also try to meet with alternative federations and the independent unions. There was agreement that we should try to listen to and understand all the groups, but that our different experiences all contribute to the network as a whole. There were a number of comments about how unions used to routinely meet with Israeli unions, but this has now stopped and links are being made with progressive Israeli organisations, conscientious objectors, supporters of Palestinian human rights, etc. There was widespread agreement that the network can make a significant contribution to promoting delegations and developing our understanding of the Palestinian trade union movement. Proposals included one big network delegation, that the network organise sectoral delegations eg teachers, and that it facilitate a European tour of Palestinian trade unionists.

A detailed report on trade union delegations and feed-back from the workshops will be available on the website.

## Closing Statement – Building a strong European trade union voice

When we launched the invitation to endorse the European Trade Union Initiative for Justice in Palestine our call was for a coordinated mobilization of the European trade union movement to take effective action to bring an end to European complicity in Israel's denial of Palestinian rights and grave violations of international law.

Our first conference in Brussels was a great success and following that conference, we expanded the steering group which now meets regularly. We have become a trade union network representing over six million workers. We produced a report and video from the 2016 conference, a May Day leaflet on European complicity – which is still relevant and can be used in interventions today. We have also created a website, produced a newsletter and have commissioned the research discussed yesterday on how European complicity is undermining decent work in Palestine.

A large part of our recent work was the organization of this conference. The administrative and organizational work was very time consuming. Our intention was for the conference to have three main goals (1) to report back on the work of the initiative (2) be educational and allow delegates debate and discuss the key issues (3) Discuss how we take our work forward. The open sessions and workshops were organized to try to achieve these three goals.

We now have a coordinator working on a part time basis. This is a step forward but we really need somebody working full time on behalf of the network if we are to succeed in becoming an effective European trade union solidarity network. As a steering group we do not have all the answers and we are still discussing the best way of getting more unions to join the network, strengthen coordination at a European level, and ensure we are making progress on our priorities. The areas we are looking at concentrating on include European wide campaigns dealing with EU complicity and the complicity of individual European governments. In our workshops we addressed many of these issues. We have had an outstanding participation from delegates and on the basis of that we have a number of important recommendations to take forward.

## Recommendations

### In order to fulfil its legal obligations under international law the EU should:

- Stop all economic transactions with illegal Israeli settlements.
- Suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement until Israel abides by its second clause which requires respect for human rights.
- Implement the recommendation of the European Council on Foreign Relations to halt all financial transactions with Israeli banks that finance Israel's occupation, including the wall and settlements.
- Stop considering the import of Israeli natural gas or electric power given Israel's pillage of Palestinian energy resources and the serious legal, financial and security risks involved in such an undertaking.
- Impose a two-way military embargo on Israel, as was done against apartheid South Africa, including cutting funding to all Israeli companies and universities involved in military research that enables the commission of Israel's war crimes.
- The EU and member states should support initiatives which contribute to decent work for Palestinian workers, and the development of a viable Palestinian economy.

### European trade unions, working alongside the European network are recommended to:

- Put pressure on the EU, European governments and corporations, to fulfil the above recommendations.
- Spread the knowledge that states are not bound by EU trade agreements with Israel in that there is no derogation from their duty under international law regarding recognition and trade with Israeli Settlements.
- Encourage the use of legal action in state courts regarding illegal trade with the settlements. National Courts. If contested state courts have the right to refer that question to the Court of Justice of the European Union. This should be tested.
- Take action within their workplace to inform workers and employers about the work conditions of Palestinian workers and ensure that their enterprises are not involved in any relation with Israeli or global enterprises violating the international law.
- Audit their own supply chains to ensure they do not have financial ties with companies complicit with the occupation.
- Undertake research and work with pension funds to put pressure on complicit companies.
- Highlight the suffering of the people of Gaza and mobilise in solidarity with them, including supporting the call for a boycott and military embargo.
- Work collaboratively to develop a strong European trade union voice on Palestine.
- Participate in trade union delegations to Palestine and the establishment of links with the Palestinian trade union movement.
- Support Palestinian workers and their unions through campaigns, projects, twinning and other solidarity actions.
- Working to ensure municipalities adopt procurement policies that exclude complicit companies.
- Target and raise awareness in media, with political parties, other civil society actors and respected public figures.
- Be realistic about the need to allocate time and resources to this, and be committed to long-term campaigns – challenging apartheid South Africa is a good example of this.
- Make active links with the European Trade Union Initiative for justice in Palestine and encourage other unions to do so.
- Pass appropriate and effective solidarity motions in their own unions.
- Work with national federations, international congresses like the ETUC and ITUC, and international sectoral federations to promote effective solidarity.



ALL PHOTOS: INGUNN ERIKSEN





<http://www.etun-palestine.org/site/>