

To Ms. Federica Mogherini - High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

To Mr Carlos Moedas - European Commission, DG for Research and Innovation

Brussels, June 4, 2019

Re: Letter from European researchers and academics concerning Israel's participation in Horizon Europe

Dear Ms. Federica Mogherini,
Dear Mr. Moedas,

We researchers and academics from Europe are writing to you in order to express our deep concern about the participation of Israel and its military companies in EU Research Programs. While we write, new Israeli raids flare up and the smoldering remnant of Gaza protesters of the Great March of Return, already forgotten and forsaken. More than 270 unarmed civilians were killed during the March of return, including women, children and persons with disabilities and thousands more were injured [28.939, of whom 7.247 by live fire]¹. They were only demanding their rights enshrined in international law: end of the illegal blockade and for the right of return to their ancestral homes from which they were expelled.

A report of the United Nation's Independent Commission of Inquiry published earlier this year concluded that the Israeli army might have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity by indiscriminately killing health workers, journalists and unarmed protesters who did not pose any imminent threats to the soldiers².

Relentless violence rages again after 11 years of inhumane siege and three military assaults that shattered the fabric of normal life. Gaza is declared to be uninhabitable by 2020 according to a report by the UN³, but this "environmentally defined" deadline reflects only the intentionality of an imposed series of emergencies, followed each time by a further decrease in health, energy, food independence and commerce after each episode of armed aggression since 2007.

The hermetic siege combined with the systematic large scale military destruction is slowly strangling nearly the two million inhabitants of Gaza. None of the basic civilian infrastructure such as hospitals and power plants, was ever sufficiently rebuilt after each of the three military assaults due to severe restrictions by the blockade. Electricity is available only a few hours a day, 98% of water is not drinkable, and many hospitals periodically stop functioning due to lack of medication, spare parts of machinery, electricity and fuel. Permission for patients to leave in order to receive life-saving treatment elsewhere has been continually declining in time. Tools for education, number of teachers, and rebuilding of schools are severely impaired. The inhabitants of Gaza have been consistently denied basic human rights and human dignity.

The disproportionate use of force on the civilians amounting to war crimes has also been systematic throughout all, long and short term, military operations, including the almost daily assaults to fishermen and agricultural workers.

These facts have been meticulously documented in authoritative reports by the UN⁴ and human rights organizations^{5,6} and widely condemned by the international community. Yet Israel's policies of aggression and repression have continued.

This ongoing impunity is allowing Gaza, the world's largest open air prison, to be used as a military test-field. In each offensive Israel deployed, tested and perfected new high-tech military weapons and surveillance systems⁷. These new cutting edge high-tech products are exhibited and sold as "battle-tested", an exclusive label Israeli home land security industry boasts. Israel became the world's top arms exporter per capita⁸. This grave violation of human rights is thus highly profitable for Israel's war industry-disclosing an

other side of the claim of “only self-defense” and the interests beyond the lack of measure in the aggressions on Palestinians of Gaza.

Nonetheless, in spite of continual and serious breaches of international law and violation of human rights, and regardless of the commitment for upholding human rights of European countries, Israel enjoys an exceptionally privileged status in dealing with Europe also through the Association Agreement and has been receiving grants from the European Commission in the area of research and innovation (FP7 and its successor Horizon 2020).

Funds are granted even to Israeli arms producers such as Elbit Systems and Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd. (IAI), the producers of lethal drones that were used in the Gaza military assaults against civilians ^{4,5}, together with numerous academic institutions that have close ties with Israeli military industry.

We appeal to the European Union to impose a comprehensive military embargo on Israel, as long as Israel continues to blatantly violate human rights. We are deeply disturbed that public funds contributed by European tax payers are channeled to a country that not only disregards human rights but also uses most advanced knowledge and technology for the very violation of human rights. **We believe that knowledge and innovation should serve progress in humanity and society, not to develop dual use or military research of a country that has a record history of grave human rights violations.** This is not compatible with the values Europe upholds.

In 2017 more than 150 European trade unions, political parties, human rights organizations and faith groups from over 16 European countries issued a call urging the EU to uphold its legal responsibilities and exclude Israeli military companies from EU Framework Programs ⁸.

We support Amnesty International call for a military embargo on Israel issued last year following the attacks on the unarmed protesters of the Great March of Return using maiming bullets and brutal means by the Israeli army, unnecessary in that context ^{4,9}.

Youth of Gaza appealed to you to stop funding Israeli manufacturers of weapons and surveillance system that guard their open-air prison, maimed them and destroyed their future ¹⁰. In support of their outcry we call upon European Union and European Commission to suspend the Association Agreement with Israel and exclude Israel as an eligible partner for Horizon Europe (successor of Horizon 2020), as long as it refuses to comply with the rules of international law. We also share the concern of B'Tselem, Israeli human rights organization, which stated “If the international community does not come to its senses and force Israel to abide by the rules that are binding to every state in the world, it will pull the rug out from under the global effort to protect human rights in the post-WWII era.” ¹¹

Signatories:*

1. **Dr. Nozomi Takahashi**, Center for Inflammation Research, VIB-Ghent University, Belgium
2. **Prof. Marc Van Ranst**, Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Transplantation, KU Leuven, Belgium
3. **Dr. Leander Meuris**, Medical Biotechnology, VIB-Ghent University, Belgium
4. **Prof. Tarek Meguid**,
5. **Prof. Em. John Dugard**, Universities of Leiden and the Witwatersrand (UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory 2001-2008)
6. **Prof. Em. Herman De Ley**, Ghent University, Belgium
7. **Dr. Andrea Balduzzi**, Università di Genova, Italy
8. **Prof. Giuliano Donzellini**, University of Genua, Italy
9. **Prof. Sergio Morra**, University of Genua, Italy
10. **Prof. Paolo Bartolini**, University of Genua, Italy
11. **Dr. Angela Waldegg**, Austria
12. **Prof. Salvatore Palidda**, University of Genua, Italy
13. **Andrea Sbarbaro**, office worker (psychologist), University of Genua, Italy

14. *Prof. Marcello Maneri, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy*
15. *Dr. Syksy Räsäne, University of Helsinki, Finland*
16. *PhD. Prof. Haseeb Shehadeh, University of Helsinki, Finland*
17. *Paola Manduca, Former Associate Professor Genetics, University of Genoa, Italy*
18. *Prof. Em. Giorgio Forti, Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy*
19. *Adjunct Professor Pertti Multanen, University of Tampere, Finland*
20. *Dr. Angela Flynn, University College Cork, Ireland*
21. *Docente ordinario Giuseppe Mosconi, Università di Padova, Italy*
22. *Prof. Anna Boato, Università di Genova, Italy*
23. *Dr. Ronit Lentin, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland,*
24. *Mathias Urban, Desmond Chair of Early Childhood Education, Dublin City University, Ireland*
25. *Prof. Sancia Gaetani, Già Istituto Nazionale Nutrizione, Italy*
26. *James Roche, Lecturer, Technological University Dublin, Ireland*
27. *Prof. Angelo Baracca, University of Florence, Italy*
28. *Prof. Giorgio M. Giallocosta, University of Genoa, Italy*
29. *Prof PhD Alessandro Bianchi, Department Informatics - Univ. Bari, Italy*
30. *Em. Prof Elisabetta Donini, University of Turin, Italy*
31. *Prof. Luca Queirolo Palmas, University of Genoa, Italy*
32. *Rosella Franconi, Senior scientist, Italy*
33. *Pediatric surgeon Bruno Cigliano, University "Federico II" Naples-Italy*
34. *Prof. Vittorio Agnoletto, University of Milan, Italy*
35. *Em. Prof. Andrea Frova, Università di Roma "La Sapienza", Physics Dept, Italy*
36. *Em. Prof. Mariapiera Marenzana, Ministry of Education, Italy*
37. *Massimo Di Rosa, Italy*
38. *Prof. Iain Chambers, University of Naples, "Orientale", Italy*
39. *Dr. Paola Rivetti, Dublin City University, Ireland*
40. *Prof. Lidia Curti, University of Naples, Italy*
41. *Phd. Kati Juva, Helsinki University Central Hospital, Finland*
42. *Hessel Christiane, Epouse de l'Ambassadeur de France Stéphane Hessel, France*
43. *Phd. Bruno Lapauw, Ghent University, Belgium*
44. *Prof. Matthieu Lenoir, Ghent University, Belgium*
45. *Prof. Stef Craps, Ghent University, Belgium*
46. *Prof. Dr. De Baerdemaeker Luc, Ghent University, Belgium*
47. *Ana Cabal, University of Antwerp, Belgium*
48. *Dr. Kristina Mercelis, Belgium*
49. *Arch assistant. Geert Pauwels, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium*
50. *R. Van Laere, Royal academy for Archaeology of Belgium*
51. *Prof. Karel Arnaut, KU Leuven – IMMRC, Belgium*
52. *Prof. Dr. Willie van Peer, University of Munich, Austria*
53. *Prof. Dr. Em. Frans Daems, University of Antwerp, Belgium*
54. *Omar Jabary Salamanca, Ghent University, Belgium*
55. *Prof. Jan Delrue, KU Leuven University, Belgium*
56. *Em. Prof. Christian Kesteloot, KU Leuven University, Belgium*
57. *Prof. Em. Aviel Verbruggen, University of Antwerp, Belgium*
58. *Medical student Serhat Yildirim, Ghent University, Belgium*
59. *Prof. Emer. Piet Mertens, KU Leuven, Belgium*
60. *Associate Professor Nadia Fadil, KU Leuven, Belgium*
61. *Em. Prof. Dr. Patric Jacobs, Ghent University, Geology Department, Belgium*
62. *Honourary Professor Michel Vanhoorne, Ghent University, Belgium*
63. *Docent Jan Wyns, Belgium*
64. *Em. Prof. Marc David, Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium*

65. *Prof. Pieter Rombouts, Ghent University, Belgium*
66. *Mireille Gleizes, Belgium*
67. *Dr. Barbara Van Dyck, University of Sussex, UK*
68. *Em. Prof. Claude Veraart, University of Louvain (UCL), Belgium*
69. *Professeur Honoraire Pierre Gillis, Université de Mons, Belgium*
70. *Researcher Patrick Italiano, University of Liege, Belgium*
71. *Professeur Ordinaire Honoraire André Gob, Université de Liège, Belgium*
72. *Researcher Jacques Moriau, ULB, Belgium*
73. *Philosopher Marc Vandepitte, Technische Scholen Mechelen, Belgium*
74. *Abdessalam Faraj, Belgium*
75. *PhD Gillet S. University of Namur, Belgium*
76. *Em. Prof. Mateo Alaluf, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
77. *Prof. Em. Biesemans Monique, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium*
78. *Em. Prof. Fred Louckx, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium*
79. *Prof. Marc Jacquemain, University of Liege, Belgium*
80. *Prof. Germain Marc, Université de Lille, France*
81. *Professeur-chercheur Lucienne Strivay, Université de Liège, Belgium*
82. *Prof. Gilles-Maurice de Schryver, Ghent University, Belgium*
83. *Researcher Andrew Crosby, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
84. *Prof. Bert Cornillie, KU Leuven, Belgium*
85. *Docent Dario Giugliano, Accademia di Belle Arti di Napoli, Italy*
86. *Prof. de Beer Daniel, Université Saint-Louis, Belgium*
87. *Researcher M Louise Carels, Université de Liège, Belgium*
88. *Prof. Victor Ginsburgh, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
89. *Em. Prof. Heinz D. Hurwitz, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
90. *M.A. Maria Aurora De Angelis, SOAS University of London, UK*
91. *Dr. Jef Peeters, KU Leuven, Belgium*
92. *Em. Prof. Magda Devos, University of Ghent, Belgium*
93. *Em. Prof. Norbert Van den Bergh, Gent University, Belgium*
94. *Em. Prof. Stefan Kesenne, University of Antwerp, Belgium*
95. *Prof. Dr. Em. Madeline Lutjeharms, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium*
96. *Marie Scheirlinck, Belgium*
97. *Koen Verrept, VUB, Belgium*
98. *Prof. Roberto Beneduce, University of Turin, Italy*
99. *Prof. Patricia Willson, Université de Liège, Belgium*
100. *Em. Prof. Christiane Schomblond, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
101. *Em. Prof. Florimond De Smedt, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium*
102. *Professeur Honoraire Mormont Marc, Université de Liège, Belgium*
103. *Dr. Zahidi, University of Antwerpen, Belgium*
104. *PhD Leena Saraste, Finland*
105. *Em. Prof. P. Marage, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
106. *Em. Prof. Michel Gevers, Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium*
107. *Senior Research Associate Giselle Corradi, Ghent University, Belgium*
108. *Tiziana Terranova, Italy*
109. *Honorary Prof. Albert Martens, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium*
110. *Em. Prof. Vandermotten Christian, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
111. *Prof. Jean-Claude Gregoire, Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
112. *Researcher Xavier May, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
113. *Dr. Duez Colette, University of Liege, Belgium*
114. *Phd Tanneke Herklots, the Netherlands,*
115. *Em. Prof. Marc De Meyere, Gent University, Belgium*

116. *Researcher Antonio Mazzeo, Italy*
117. *Prof. Michele Carducci, UniSalento – Lecce, Italy*
118. *Prof. Carine Defoort, KU Leuven, Belgium*
119. *Dr. Chiara Cardelli, Institute for Quantum Optics and Quantum Information Vienna, Austria*
120. *Prof. Em. Pieter Saey, Gent University, Belgium*
121. *Independent scholar Celeste Ianniciello, Italy*
122. *Em. Prof. Jonathan Rosenhead, London School of Economics, UK*
123. *Prof. Dr. Em. Erik Van der Straeten, Belgium*
124. *Prof. James Dickins, University of Leeds, UK*
125. *Dr. Tajul Islam, University of Leeds, UK*
126. *Dr. Barry Heselwood, University of Leeds, UK*
127. *Patrik Lasure, Pax Christi Vlaanderen, Belgium*
128. *Wim Nerinckx, Belgium*
129. *René Weemaels, Belgium*
130. *André Posman, Belgium*
131. *Technician Kelly Lemeire, University of Ghent, Belgium*
132. *Em. Prof. Schomblond Christiane, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium*
133. *Dr. Gie Van Den Berghe, University Gent, Belgium*
134. *Rasha Soliman, University of Leeds, UK*
135. *Simona Antonova, UMC Utrecht, the Netherlands*
136. *PhD Michail Mamantopoulos, Belgium*
137. *Dr. Tom Moerenhout, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Switzerland*
138. *Prof. Dirk Vandermeulen, KU Leuven, Belgium*
139. *Em. Prof. Heinz Hurwitz, Université Libre Bruxelles, Belgium*
140. *Sénateur Honoraire Galand Pierre, Belgium*
141. *Prof. Megan Povey, University of Leeds, UK*
142. *Branch President UCL UCU Sean Wallis, University College London, UK*
143. *Dr. M Akhtar, University of Leeds, UK*
144. *Tom Hickey, University of Brighton, UK*
145. *Dr. Karen Evans, University of Liverpool, UK*
146. *Dr. Anne Alexander, University of Cambridge, UK*
147. *Dr Anandi Ramamurthy, Sheffield Hallam University, UK*
148. *Prof. Franco Montanari, University of Genoa, Italy*
149. *Dr. Stephanie Kourula, Belgium*
150. *Em. Prof. Chris Roberts, University of Manchester, UK*
151. *Researcher- PhD student Ainhoa Ruiz Benedicto, Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau, Spain*
152. *Tica Font, Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau, Spain*
153. *Researcher Edgard Vega, Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau, Spain*
154. *Ph Dr. Retired Assistant Professor Xavier Bohigas, Uinversitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Catalonia-Spain*
155. *Prof. Jan Dumolyn, University of Ghent, Belgium*

** Institutions are added for identification purposes only. All signatories have signed the letter in personal capacity*

References:

- 1 <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-snapshot-casualties-context-demonstrations-and-hostilities-gaza-30-mar-2018-22>
- 2 Report of the independent international commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory - A/HRC/40/74

3 <https://unctad.org/en/Pages/PressRelease.aspx?OriginalVersionID=260>

4 Report of the detailed findings of the independent commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-21/1- A/HRC/29/CRP.

5 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE15/032/2014/en/>

6 https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/iopt0609webwcover_0.pdf

7 <https://electronicintifada.net/content/gaza-laboratory-boosts-profits-israels-war-industry/25636>

8 <http://www.eccpalestine.org/european-trade-unions-political-parties-human-rights-organisationsand-faith-groups-call-on-the-eu-to-stop-its-support-to-israeli-military-companies/>

9 <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/04/israel-arms-embargo-needed-as-military-unlawfully-kills-andmaims-gaza-protesters/>

10 <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-Tg71PKoPC2dsenUe3d0aqyrgYewGxb6-6aqaKJ3FkY/edit?usp=sharing>

11 https://www.btselem.org/sites/default/files/publications/201804_if_the_heart_be_not_callous_eng.pdf