

JUSTICE FOR PALESTINE: A QUICK QUESTION SHEET FOR ELECTION CANDIDATES

- Keep it handy for when politicians come calling during the 2016 General Election



Intro: The Irish government must meet its legal obligations not to provide assistance to Israeli violations of international law. It can begin to do this by ending all arms trade with Israel, ending preferential EU trade agreements and banning all trade with companies that operate within or provide services to illegal Israeli settlements.

Ask them to pledge to help end the Irish Arms Trade With Israel

Notes: Ireland has bought €14.7m worth of arms and military components from Israel over the last decade, while Irish-based companies have exported €6.42m worth of military and 'dual use' hardware to Israel since 2011. Military items exported from Israel will have used Palestinians as 'human test subjects' so such weapons can be marketed as 'battle proven'. Any military components exported to Israel will be used to kill and maim yet more Palestinians and to entrench the decades-long military occupation.

Neither Israel nor arms manufacturers in Ireland should be allowed to profit from the killing of Palestinians; this trade in death must cease. It should be unconscionable for a state like Ireland that claims 'respect for and the promotion of human rights has always been and will continue to be a cornerstone of foreign policy' to allow such a trade to continue. Therefore the Irish government must end the Irish arms trade with Israel until it ends the occupation of Palestinian land and complies fully with its obligations under international law.

Ask them to take the pledge on the IPSC website at www.ipsc.ie/ge16

Ask them to pledge to suspend Israel from the EuroMed Agreement

The most effective action that can be taken at EU level to help secure justice for Palestinians is to suspend the EU Israel Association Agreement (aka, the Euro-Med Agreement) – this is the main treaty between the EU and Israel and grants Israel trading privileges with the EU. Article 2 of the Agreement states that "respect for human rights" form an "essential element" of the agreement. Therefore Israel – a serial human rights violator - simply should not be a party to the agreement.

The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini has stated that "the Association Agreement between the EU and Israel ... can be terminated by either Party."

That the EU currently refuses to even consider the issue of suspension reflects negatively on its proclaimed commitment to "democratic and human rights values". The Irish government should take the brave step to become the first EU member state to openly make this call for the suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement. Even the very fact of it being discussed at all could have a dramatic impact on Israel's behaviour.

Ask them to take the pledge on the IPSC website at www.ipsc.ie/ge16

Ask them to support banning the importation of illegal Israel settlement goods

Notes: Despite the introduction of proper labelling for (some) products produced in illegal Israeli settlements, this alone is far from enough to bring pressure to bear on Israel's illegal settlement enterprise. For example, it would be unthinkable in Ireland that a criminal would be allowed to sell stolen items as long as they were labelled as being part of a criminal enterprise. It should also be unacceptable for Israeli entities to be allowed to do essentially the same thing.

Neither does labelling fulfil Ireland's obligations not to provide assistance to Israeli violations of international law. In order to fully adhere to these obligations, Ireland must unilaterally ban the import of all products from illegal Israeli settlements entirely, including all products from Israeli 'complicit companies' that operate within the illegal settlements as a further means of preventing potential fraud via incorrect labelling. In 1986, Ireland became the first country in Western Europe to ban imports of fruit and vegetables from Apartheid South Africa. The Irish government should again lead the way in this regard and ban settlement goods entirely.