

Open Letter to EUHR/VP Kaija Kallas in view of the Council of Ministers of July 12th 2025

Dear EUHR/VP Kaija Kallas,

I am writing you as Secretary General of AFSC, American Friend Service Committee, as well as a Palestinian-American.

The [*American Friends Service Committee*](#) is a Quaker faith-based organization and a Nobel Peace Laureate for our work in Gaza. We have promoted a world free of violence, inequality, and oppression for over a century. AFSC started working in Israel and Palestine in 1948, when we were asked by the UN to respond to the needs of those displaced during the 1948 war. For over seven decades, our programs have provided humanitarian aid, agricultural development, kindergartens, midwife training, peacebuilding programming, and trauma healing to both Israelis and Palestinians.

Following repeated calls from both civil society and human rights organizations to suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement, as well as massive civil society demonstrations across the continent, a [review of the EU-Israel Association Agreement was undertaken. It found Israel in serious breach of Article 2](#), requiring respect for human rights and democratic principles.

Despite these findings,, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting on June 23rd did not to take any action. [As you stated](#): “We will contact Israel to present our findings and look at how we can improve the situation on the ground [...] The review is very clear [...] It is not intended to punish Israel, but to trigger concrete improvements for the people and the lives of people in Gaza. So, that is what we are trying to do now. If the situation does not improve, then we can also discuss further measures and come back to this in July.” We will contact Israel to present our findings and look at how we can improve the situation on the ground [...] The review is very clear [...] It is not intended to punish Israel, but to trigger concrete improvements for the people and the lives of people in Gaza. So, that is what we are trying to do now. If the situation does not improve, then we can also discuss further measures and come back to this in July.”

Likewise, the European Council meeting of June 26th, remarked the “catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza” but did not go beyond a call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

In 20 months of Israeli military operations more than 55,000 Palestinians in Gaza have been killed, another 1.9 million people have been forcibly displaced. Israel has continuously obstructed access and safe passage of humanitarian aid, and since March 2, re-instated a total blockade on lifesaving supplies, forcing the vast majority of the Palestinians in Gaza towards death by starvation. Further, Israel relentlessly attacks civilian and protected personnel and infrastructure including hospitals, leaving Palestinians without any means of recovery. Every red line has been crossed in Gaza.

The EU needs to act now. In its meeting of July 23rd, the Council must activate Article 79 and suspend the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

The EU should also immediately end all military cooperation with Israel and should ban the sale of military items to Israel until there is a ceasefire in Gaza and Israel ends its illegal occupation of Palestinian territory.

While limitations on arms exports remain a matter of national competence, Article 2(2)(c) of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP requires Member States to “deny an export license if there is a clear risk that the military technology or equipment to be exported might be used in the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian law”. The persistent violation of said article by several Member States amid the silence of EU institutions is harming the EU’s reputation as a consistent supporter of international and human rights norms.

Likewise, there is an apparent double standard in the EU’s cooperation with the International Criminal Court (ICC). When several EU leaders entertained the possibility of hosting visits from ICC fugitive Benjamin Netanyahu, such prospects were not promptly condemned by the HRVP but were instead largely ignored. The EU must ensure compliance with the ICC and rather than hosting individuals indicted by the court, the EU should enforce the court's decisions.

The EU needs to support the rights of the Palestinian people and a just and lasting peace for all. We urge you to abide by your obligations under international law to prevent the crime of genocide. We also ask that you advocate for a permanent ceasefire, an end to the occupation in both Gaza and the West Bank - including East Jerusalem – and support the right of return for all Palestinians.

Annexation, occupation, and ethnic cleansing are unacceptable under any circumstances, and for Palestinians these realities have endured for decades. The only path to peace is addressing the root causes of violence and building systems grounded in justice, self-determination, and human rights. The European Union, which was originally created to ensure peace and growth on the continent, can play a pivotal role in securing the same for Palestine and the region.

For these reasons, I urge you to do all you can so that in its meeting of July 23rd, the Council activates Article 79 and suspends the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

I would be happy to share more of our work and insight on the ground by meeting either in person or virtually.

Best regards,



Joyce Ajlouny