

April 28, 2026

Dear High Representative Vice-President Kallas,

Dear Commissioner Šefčovič,

We, undersigned Members of the European Parliament, write to you following the Foreign Affairs Council meeting of 21 April. We welcome the initiative of Sweden and France regarding the imports of goods from illegal Israeli settlements<sup>1</sup> as well as the HRVP Kallas' commitment to bring it to Commissioner Šefčovič with a view to tabling a Commission proposal on the matter.<sup>2</sup>

**In this context, we request that the Commission examines the full range of trade measures available under EU law, including a comprehensive ban on trade with Israeli settlements in the territories occupied by Israel since 1967.** We have seen the Swedish-French proposal that in addition to suggesting increased tariffs for settlement products also includes a call for a full import ban.<sup>3</sup>

Our concern is not merely one of grave alarm about the situation in the occupied territories, but also a matter of legal coherence. The EU has long considered Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the Golan Heights, as illegal under international law. The International Court of Justice confirmed unambiguously in its Advisory Opinion of July 2024 that Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territory is unlawful. The ICJ further established that third States are obliged not to recognise, assist or render aid to this illegal situation, that they must "abstain from entering into economic or trade dealings with Israel concerning the Occupied Palestinian Territory or parts thereof which may entrench its unlawful presence in the territory", and "take steps to prevent trade or investment relations that assist in the maintenance of the illegal situation".

The EU's existing policy, which allows for continued imports of settlement products on non-preferential terms and merely specifies how they should be labelled, is clearly not

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<sup>1</sup> Press release from Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21 April 2026.

<https://www.government.se/press-releases/2026/04/government-presents-proposals-to-increase-pressure-on-illegal-settlements-in-west-bank/>

<sup>2</sup> Foreign Affairs Council: Press remarks by High Representative Kaja Kallas, 21 April 2026.

[https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-affairs-council-press%C2%A0remarks%C2%A0-high-representative-kaja-kallas%C2%A0-press-conference\\_en](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/foreign-affairs-council-press%C2%A0remarks%C2%A0-high-representative-kaja-kallas%C2%A0-press-conference_en)

<sup>3</sup> Post on X, 23 April 2024. <https://x.com/mayasioint/status/2047195641378394206>

designed to *prevent* such trade dealings, as required according to the Court.<sup>4</sup> The EU must therefore consider stronger restrictions, including a ban on such trade.

Consistency with international law is not merely desirable, it is a requirement flowing directly from our Treaties. Articles 3(5) and 21 TEU oblige the Union to contribute to the strict observance of international law in its relations with the wider world and to respect it in the different areas of its external action. Under Article 207 TFEU, the EU's common commercial policy "shall be conducted in the context of the principles and objectives of the Union's external action".

The EU has used its common commercial policy to prohibit trade in products made with forced labour and products used for torture, restricted trade in conflict minerals, and banned imports of Russian gas. It must also bring its trade relations with Israel and the occupied territories in line with its stated principles. Higher tariffs or licensing requirements would not resolve the underlying incoherence: that goods and services produced in illegal settlements continue to benefit from EU market access at all. In addition, the Israeli government could undermine the impact of these measures by increasing its existing compensation subsidies for exporters of products from settlements to the EU. A full ban on trade with settlements in goods and services is the measure most proportionate to, and consistent with, the EU's own obligations under international law.

We note that in the absence of common EU action so far, five member states (Spain, Slovenia, Ireland, Belgium, and The Netherlands) have already decided to ban imports from settlements at the national level, underscoring the need for a common EU approach.

**We therefore urge you to examine and propose a trade measure aimed at aligning commercial relations with Israel and the occupied territories with international law by banning trade with Israeli settlements.**

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

1. Hilde Vautmans (Renew)
2. Barry Andrews (Renew)

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<sup>4</sup> Gleider Hernández, Ramses A. Wessel, Expert Legal Opinion on the Implications for the European Union of the July 2024 International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion regarding the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. June 2025.  
[https://pure.rug.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/1332760520/Hernandez-Wessel\\_Expert-Legal-Opinion-on-ICJ-AO-19-July-2024-and-the-EU.pdf](https://pure.rug.nl/ws/portalfiles/portal/1332760520/Hernandez-Wessel_Expert-Legal-Opinion-on-ICJ-AO-19-July-2024-and-the-EU.pdf)

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