

EU Slaps Down Netanyahu Government as Europe Condemns Israel's Misleading Labelling of Goods

By [Anthony Bellchambers](#)

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"All EU agreements with Israel must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967." - EU foreign ministers' statement

Ministers reiterated the EU's position that the Palestinian Territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 Middle East war - including the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights - are not, and will never be, part of the internationally recognized borders of Israel.

Whilst the EU has a free-trade agreement with Israel, the largest single trading bloc in the world sees the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights as illegal under international law.

The policy of the current Israeli government is to covertly establish so-called 'facts on the ground' intended to frustrate the intention of the UN and the international community including the EU and the U.K., for an independent state for over 5 million indigenous Palestinian Arabs.

These 'facts on the ground' that include all illegal settlements on the West Bank must be dismantled and all settlers repatriated if the Israeli state wishes to continue its trade with Europe. Failing which, the EU-Israel Association Agreement risks being suspended and the possibility of tariffs being imposed on all Israeli goods.

"Settlement businesses unavoidably contribute to Israeli policies that dispossess and harshly discriminate against Palestinians, while profiting from Israel's theft of Palestinian land and other resources." said Human Rights Watch, Business Director, Arvind Ganesan.

Israel has constructed over 230 illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem since its war with Palestinians in 1967. HRW stressed that businesses trading with settlers are helping these communities grow.

Settlement businesses benefit from unrestricted access to Palestinian land, water and receive government subsidies. They oversee the cultivation of thousands of hectares of Palestinian land and export agricultural products that are often labelled as made in Israel.

At the same time, Palestinians are barred from building or extracting natural resources in parts of the occupied West Bank. Between 2000 and 2012, Israel rejected 94 percent of construction permit requests filed by Palestinians.

Over 500,000 Jewish settlers live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, according to United Nations figures. The settlements are considered illegal by the UN, and the West Bank is

considered an occupied territory by the International Court of Justice.

Notes:

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/israel-frantic-over-eu-attempts-to-tighten-sanctions-against-west-bank-jewish-settlements/5502328>

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