

Commissioner Chris Patten
Commissioner for External Relations
The European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1047 Bruxelles

23 June 2004

Dear Commissioner,

Re: Suspension of EU-Israel Association Agreement

The European Union has condemned the destruction in Rafah by the Israeli Army and the United Nations Security Council has adopted a resolution condemning the killing of Palestinian civilians in Rafah and calling on Israel to stop the demolition of Palestinian homes. Furthermore, Amnesty International and other international human rights agencies have recognized that Israel is guilty of war crimes and grave breaches of humanitarian law, international human rights law and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

The EU's Association Agreement with Israel is expressly contingent on Israel observing basic human rights and yet these clauses have never been invoked. Until Israel complies with the EU's principles of respect for human and civil rights, as outlined by the 'Copenhagen Criteria', the Association Agreement with Israel should be suspended.

Furthermore, it is time to bring an international protection presence to the occupied Gaza and the West Bank to ensure the safety of the Palestinian civilian population living under occupation.

The EU says it is committed to promoting human rights, and the Association Agreement explicitly provides for its own suspension if either party is found to be undermining human rights. In the light of the many documented and explicit human rights abuses associated with the construction of the Wall and recent events in Rafah, it is clear that the Agreement must therefore be suspended.

Peace can only flourish in a climate of confidence and hope. Draconian measures which go much further than what is needed to prevent terrorism will increase anger and resentment, and ultimately fuel conflict and insecurity, not reduce them.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Caroline Lucas MEP