

# New EU Guidelines on Israel

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In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

*A [previous article](#) discussed them. They pertain to illegal Israeli West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Golan settlements. They leave besieged Gaza unaddressed.*

It's a glaring omission. It's dismissive of 1.7 million Gazans. Their rights don't matter. Israel's suffocating them illegally. A humanitarian crisis persists.

Dealing with it responsibly is urgent. EU nations don't care. It's off their radar. So is militarized occupation too horrific to tolerate.

Long overdue Palestinian self-determination's not recognized. Full EU affirmation awaits. It's not forthcoming. Israeli lawlessness matters more. Palestinian rights don't matter.

Perhaps baby steps are better than none. They will be if implemented. Rhetoric most often belies policies. Will this time be different?

According to EU officials:

New guidelines "are in conformity with the EU's longstanding position that Israeli settlements are illegal under international law and with the non-recognition by the EU of Israel's sovereignty over the occupied territories, irrespective of their legal status under domestic Israeli law."

Future EU/Israeli agreements will include a "territorial clause." It requires Israel to say settlements are Palestinian territory. They're not part of Israel.

Nor is Golan. It's stolen Syrian territory. Damascus rightfully wants it back. Israel remains hardline. It concedes nothing.

It's waging undeclared war on Syria. It's doing it jointly with Washington, Turkey, other key NATO partners and rogue regional states.

EU guidelines reflect longstanding EU policy. It's never been enforced. Measures without teeth lack credibility. Expect little difference this time. Perhaps later. Not now.

New guidelines are recommendations. They're not binding policy. EU nations can go their own way. They can pick and choose what they wish, if anything.

They can ignore measures at their discretion. They can say one thing and do another. Same old, same old persists.

Guidelines are effective January 1, 2014. They cover virtually all areas of cooperation. They

include funding, business and scientific cooperation, scholarships, tourism, sports, youth exchanges, research funds, and other joint initiatives exploiting Occupied Palestine.

They exclude EU/Israeli trade. Doing so's a huge omission. At most, Israel's urged to label settlement products accordingly.

More than mild pressure's needed. Firm legal standards are key. They're not imposed. Expect business as usual unless or until proved otherwise.

[Netanyahu wants guidelines postponed](#). He rejects them. He's pressuring European leaders for help. He told Germany's Die Welt:

"For years the Europeans have been wining about the fact that the Americans are not involved enough" in so-called peace negotiations.

"Now that they are involved, this action actually undermines the American efforts and undermines the negotiations."

No process whatever exists. It never did. It doesn't now. Talks were stillborn from inception.

Israel doesn't negotiate. It demands. Palestine's legitimate government is excluded. It's coup d'etat one's involved. It collaborates with Israel. It does so shamelessly.

Talks are a convenient illusion. They're worthless. If resumed, expect nothing different this time. Israeli terms are hardline.

They demand a Palestinian Versailles. They got one at Oslo. Palestinians got nothing in return.

Israel's all take and no give. It's always been that way. It's more so today than ever.

Israel's government is its worst in history. Fascists run it. Militarized occupation yields nothing.

Compromise is out of the question. Israeli deals are made to be broken. They're not worth the paper they're written on.

Guidelines exclude Occupied Palestine-based human rights groups. So are others promoting peace.

They don't apply to Israel's government, ministries, national agencies or private individuals. In other words, built-in omissions are big enough to drive Israeli tanks through.

On July 17, [Haaretz](#) headlined "Diplomatic earthquake: How the EU caught Israel off guard with its new settlement guidelines."

On Friday, they're scheduled to be officially released. EU institutions, foundations, and financial organizations got copies about two weeks ago. So did all 28 EU member states.

An unnamed senior Foreign Ministry official said Israel was informed 10 days ago.

EU External Action Service Middle East Branch head Christian Berger notified Israel's EU

ambassador, David Walzer. He suggested advance talks on them prior to release.

According to Haaretz, an unnamed “high-ranking US administration official involved in attempts to resume peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians warned that if Secretary of State John Kerry’s efforts to restart talks (failed), the EU countries would take additional measures against (Israel’s) settlements...”

“The Europeans are giving us time to complete the efforts to resume the talks,” he said. “But if we don’t succeed, they’ll want to go in other directions and take measures. The Israelis know that very well.”

It bears repeating. EU rhetoric belies its policy. Challenging Israel’s verboten. It’s always been this way. Expect nothing more than cosmetic change now. If implemented, it’ll be too little to matter. It’ll be easily circumvented. It always was before.

At the same time, new guidelines shocked Netanyahu. Perhaps they’re a step in the right direction. They’re more detailed than previous efforts. Maybe they’ll encourage more.

According to one senior Israeli Foreign Ministry official, EU bureaucrats may have drafted new guidelines under the radar. It’s unknown if senior diplomatic officials were involved.

EU Foreign and Security Policy Representative Catherine Ashton met with Netanyahu three weeks ago. She said nothing at the time. It’s unclear what she knew.

On Tuesday evening, Netanyahu held an emergency meeting. Ministers Naftali Bennet, Tzipi Livni, and Ze’ev Elkin attended. So did Foreign, Economic and Justice Ministry experts.

They’re cautious. They can’t judge what impact, if any, Israeli public and private companies may face.

According to Haaretz, they believe potential damage could be severe. Many areas may be affected.

The main issue they addressed was “the indirect connections that Israeli companies, such as banks and large companies, have with the settlements.”

It’s feared new guidelines will preclude “cooperating with banks, supermarkets and large companies in Israel that have branches over the Green Line or that engage in projects in the settlements.”

“Israeli construction and infrastructure companies could suffer the most harm.”

Ministers Bennett and Elkin want EU nations given an ultimatum.

They want Netanyahu telling them if new guidelines are implemented, “Israel would stop the EU from operating in the West Bank, freeze its projects in Area C and not include it in the peace process in any way.”

Livni wants “sabotage” avoided. She wants nothing interfering with John Kerry’s peace initiative. “The only way to neutralize” EU measures is by resuming talks, she said.

Netanyahu opposes added toughness. “Don’t forget,” he said, “we need Europe for sensitive security issues and particularly Iran’s nuclear program.”

Consensus was reached. Israel will try to convince EU members to delay publishing guidelines. Efforts will be made to initiate talks before doing so.

He'll call Catherine Ashton. He'll enlist her support. He'll say publishing Friday assures internal pressure against Palestinian concessions.

Peace talks will be harmed, he'll claim. As explained above, Israel's all take and no give. It doesn't negotiate. It demands.

It yields nothing. It never did. It won't now. Peace is a non-starter. Israel deplores it. It prioritizes violence and instability. It's more true now than ever.

Ashton and other EU officials know it. They wink, nod, and bend. Expect nothing different this time.

Israel's in full damage control. Science and Ministry officials claim implementation will force severe R & D cuts. They say by around 40%. They'll say anything to continue business as usual. Don't bet against it.

Halting settlement construction is fundamental. Netanyahu prioritizes it. He wants all valued Judea and Samaria areas Judaized. He wants Jerusalem as Israel's exclusive capital.

He wants business as usual more hardline than ever. Who'll challenge him responsibly? Who'll step up to the plate and do it? EU leaders never did before. They won't now.

Israel's Civil Administration Supreme Planning Council approved over 900 new West Bank homes. They're planned on stolen Palestinian land.

Will EU leaders object? At best rhetorically. Actionable follow-through's excluded. It always was before. It won't be different this time.

Issues mattering most aren't addressed. Others lack teeth. Business as usual persists. It's been this way for decades.

#### EU Member State Guidelines

A third party sent them by email. They're available ahead of official release. They're titled:

#### Commission Notice

[Guidelines](#) on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments by the EU from 2014 onwards.

#### A Final Comment

Haaretz editors acted responsibly. They did so twice. On July 11, they denounced Israel's assault on free expression. A [previous article](#) discussed it.

On July 17, they [headlined](#) "Israel's moment of truth is approaching."

They addressed new EU guidelines. Israeli officials fear they could expand. Perhaps they could include Israeli proper. Defusing fears is simple.

"Israel's government needs to decide if it is ready to continue to endanger the country's future for the sake of continuing the occupation," said Haaretz editors.

EU patience has limits. Expect eventual exhaustion. Expect most other countries to follow. Israel may end up isolated. Bad policies beget bad results. Sooner or later it happens. It won't be different this time.

Israel must decide. Do the right thing or face consequences. The same goes for America. It's on the slippery slope as Israel. Bad endings are certain. It's just a matter of time.

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