



Committee to Protect Journalists

June 18, 2024

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen  
High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

CC:  
EU Member State Foreign Ministries

Dear President von der Leyen,  
Dear High Representative Kallas,

I am writing to urge you to take immediate and decisive action to address Israel's attacks on the press and violations of international law during the upcoming [Foreign Affairs Council on June 23](#).

We [welcomed](#) the High Representative's initiative on May 20 to review whether Israel is complying with human rights and democratic principles, as set out under the conditions of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

The evidence of abuses against the press and crimes against international law committed by Israel is [overwhelming](#).

At least [185](#) journalists and media workers have been killed since the war began, at least 17 of them deliberately targeted. Israeli forces have arbitrarily detained Palestinian journalists in Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, fired on media offices in Gaza, and banned some foreign media outlets, including Al Jazeera, from broadcasting.

International journalists are not able to access Gaza to document actions that the UN has said are "[tantamount to ethnic cleansing](#)", including the [looming prospect of famine](#). The immense burden of documentation is on local journalists. These reporters are operating under extreme conditions, facing hunger, exhaustion, constant fear for their lives and their families, and being deliberately targeted on a daily basis.

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Abuses of international law were [clearly articulated](#) in the, recently publicly leaked, November 2024 note by the former European Union Special Representative for Human Rights, Olaf Skoog. The note's references included research from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the International Court of Justice rulings. We trust that the pending review will include equally well-documented research and sourcing.

A credible review could only conclude that Israel is in fundamental breach of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement.

Given the clear violations of international law committed by Israel, I call on you to prepare an [immediate proposal](#) for the full suspension of the EU-Israel Association Agreement in advance of the Foreign Affairs Council on June 23. During the meeting, the European Commission should actively press member states to take immediate and robust action on the grounds that the crisis cannot be allowed to continue.

This is the moment to demonstrate that the EU upholds international law, and will defend its international reputation on human rights and press freedom.

Yours sincerely,

Jodie Ginsberg  
Chief Executive Officer  
Committee to Protect Journalists