



Euro-Med Monitor
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Subject: European Union Support for the EuroAsia interconnector Project Gives Legitimacy to the illegal Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

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H.E. Mr. Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

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Your Excellency,

Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor (a Geneva- based human rights NGO), is greatly concerned with the European Union's support for the "EuroAsia Interconnector Project", which is of great interest for the European Commission of the EU.

This leading European Project of common interest is a cross-border infrastructure project co-financed by the European Union and "proudly supported" by UNICEF and the Athanasios Ktorides Foundation. The project that costs € 3.500.000.000 aims essentially at connecting Israel, Cyprus and Greece (Crete and Attica), and helping the European Union achieve its policy on climate objectives – such as affordable, secure and sustainable energy for all citizens by linking the energy of European countries together.

The outlined goal of the project is to end the energy isolation of Cyprus. The construction is supposed to begin in June 2019, and will last for three years - with a commissioning due date for Cyprus-Crete in December 2022 and for Crete-Israel facilities in December 2023.

However, The Euro-Med is concerned about reports showing the interconnector connecting not only with Israel's grid but also with the illegal settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory including East Jerusalem (OPT), while Palestinians continue to live without bare necessities as lighting and electric facilities.

Euro-Med would like to recall that settlers and settlements, being the result of the illegal occupation of a territory, constitute a violation of international law.

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The Fourth Geneva Convention, in its article 49, prohibits and condemns settlements by stating that moving people from, or to the occupied territory is forbidden.

Euro -Med would like to stress that supporting, and creating partnerships with a State that violates international law since decades, amounts to participating in committing international crimes. The "interconnection" of this project in similar circumstances means that the EU will import electricity produced by Israel that will feed illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the EU is in full support of such unlawful act.

The European Union has been a pioneer in supporting the rights of people in OPT and denouncing the Israeli settlements by backing up UN Security Council resolutions; as resolution 242 (1967) calling for the non recognition of the settlements and resolution 465 (1980) calling for the dismantlement of the settlements. Moreover, the Treaty of the European Union states that in its external action, the EU shall consolidate and support the rule of law and the principles of international law. In 2012, the EU expressed its commitment to ensure that all agreements concluded with the State of Israel and the European Union must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 - position reiterated in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015.

The fact that the European Union is aware of the war crimes committed by Israel, and still wants to finance and support such projects is counterproductive and contravenes to its own legal obligations and commitment. Therefore, creating electric facilities for Israel in the OPT equals to acknowledging and supporting the fact that the OPT is part of Israel territories, which is an unlawful act condemned by international law and the international community.

Euro-Med calls for the suppression of the connecting cable between Cyprus and Israel and the cessation of the project in its entirety if Israel continues expanding its settlement activities in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and refuse to dismantle the existing illegal units.

Euro-Med calls on the European Union to stop supporting the project as long as Israel continues to be an occupying power.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

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