

public committee against
TORTURE
in israel



רופאים לזכויות אדם - ישראל (ע"ר)
أطباء لحقوق الإنسان-إسرائيل
Physicians For Human Rights - Israel



BADIL
Resource Center
for Palestinian Residency
and Refugee Rights



ENSPAN CENTER
For Democracy & Human Rights
Established in Palestine August 2004



RCHRS
Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies
مركز رام الله لدراسات حقوق الإنسان



مرکز المرأة
للارشاد القانوني والاجتماعي
Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling

مركز الميزان لحقوق الإنسان
Al Mezzan Center for Human Rights

To: **Mr. Carl Bildt**
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
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12 November 2009

Dear Minister,

Re: EU Position on respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law in the OPT

The undersigned organisations would like to bring to your attention their shared concern regarding the EU's apparent inconsistent position on the protection of human rights, justice and the rule of law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT).

One of the "key objectives" of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is to strengthen the protection of human rights, justice and the rule of law in non-European Union (EU) countries, and where they are most at risk.

Under the EIDHR, the EU is providing a considerable amount of financial assistance to Palestinian civil society in support of the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in keeping with the EU's self defined human rights standards.

During the 12th Special Session of the Human Rights Council, Sweden, on behalf of the EU Group, made the following statement: "*The EU has consistently reminded all parties to the conflict of their obligations under international law. An overarching human rights priority for the EU is to combat impunity*".¹

¹ Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Hans Dahlgren, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN in Geneva, on behalf of the EU, at the 12th Special Session of the Human Rights Council on 15 October 2009.
<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/specialsession/12/index.htm>

Nevertheless, the EU has consistently failed to show support for the recommendations contained in the report of the independent international Fact-Finding Mission led by Justice Goldstone, as shown by the votes of EU Member States at the Human Rights Council on 16 October 2009, and at the UN General Assembly on 5 November.

The undersigned organisations, some of them recipients of EU aid under EIDHR, are thereby requesting an explanation of the EU's intended action on the matter of war crimes allegedly committed in the course of the so-called "Operation Cast Lead" in Gaza. As recipients of EU aid, organisations are concerned by donor inaction on accountability, and placed in an untenable position vis-à-vis Palestinian society on whose behalf we receive assistance.

It is our belief that lack of accountability for war crimes and other grave human rights violations compromise the promotion of respect for human rights and the rule of law. Without accountability, there will be no serious prospect for peace in the Middle East. Only through justice will the human rights and security of the Palestinian people be realised.

We look forward to your response and an opportunity to meaningfully engage with you on this issue.

Yours sincerely,

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General Director
Addameer

Khalil Abu Shammala
General Director
Al Dameer Association for Human Rights

Shawan Jabarin
General Director
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Issam Younis
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