

Brussels, 2 December 2015

Dear President Juncker,

We are deeply concerned about the fact that the Anglo-Danish group G4S provides security to the European Commission/European External Action Service in several European countries.

G4S Israel, a 91 % controlled subsidiary of that group, provides equipment and services to Israeli prisons at which political prisoners are held without trial and subjected to torture in total contravention with the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of civilians. By helping Israel to run five prisons and “interrogation centres”, G4S Israel participates in Israel’s use of torture and mass incarceration of more than 6,000 Palestinians. Because several of these prisons are situated inside Israel, G4S Israel also makes itself complicit in Israel’s violation of Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the transfer of prisoners from occupied territory into the territory of the occupier.

G4S Israel has contracts with the Israeli government to provide equipment and services to checkpoints in the separation wall, which was ruled illegal by the International Court of Justice in 2004.

G4S Israel provides security services to Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory, thereby making itself complicit in war crimes condemned by Article 8 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which condemns the transfer by an occupier of parts of its population into the occupied territory.

These G4S activities have been amply described over the past few years in detailed reports by organisations like the Israeli NGO "Who Profits " and the "Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Resource Centre."

For these reasons, in March 2011, MEPs wrote to the President of the European Parliament asking him to ensure that the security company G4S ended all activities in the illegal Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory as well as all activities in Israeli jails both in Palestine and in Israel and, failing this, to terminate the Parliament's contracts with G4S. Shortly after this initiative the Parliament ended its contract with G4S.

From answers supplied by the Commission to parliamentary questions¹, we understand that the Commission felt constrained by the provisions of its Financial Regulations to award these contracts to G4S. We therefore urge the Commission to make appropriate changes to those regulations so as to provide for the exclusion of firms that are guilty of, or render themselves complicit, in grave violations of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law.

It is indeed unacceptable for the European Commission/European External Action Service to have contractual relations with a firm that is engaged in providing support for activities that constitute war crimes and have many times been condemned by the international community and the EU itself. We therefore urge you to take action to that end.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

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1 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2011-003873&language=EN>,
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2015-006582&language=EN>

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CC: Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission