

European Complicity With Israel's Violations of Human Rights: THE CASE OF G4S



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EUROPEAN COORDINATION OF COMMITTEES
AND ASSOCIATIONS FOR PALESTINE

What is G4S?

G4S is the biggest security company in the world. **G4S holds 50% of Policity Ltd.**, which provides training for the Israeli police forces. The company has been contracted in 2012 to build and operate Israel's National Police Academy, in collaboration with the Israeli police, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Public Security.

Israeli police forces are widely denounced for their systematic use of torture and other illegal practices, by the UN Human Rights Council¹ or Amnesty International².

With its operation and partial ownership of Israel's National Police Academy and the training it provides to the Israeli police, **G4S is deeply complicit in Israel's illegal and violent repression of Palestinians.**



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Tools of repression

Israeli security forces are directly involved in several crimes, raised as points of concerns by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights in the oPT, Michael Lynk, in July 2020. He particularly alerted on “practices that may amount to ill-treatment and torture, including with regards to children”³ and highlighted the fact that, according to Addameer, in the period from 1967 to 2019, **222 prisoners have died while under Israeli custody**⁴.

The Israeli Police puts in place a series of measures designed at **intimidating and silencing human rights defenders**, such as arbitrary detentions, physical threats and harassment, intensive defamation campaigns or restrictions on freedom of movement, free expression and peaceful assembly⁵. Such measures act directly against the values of the European Union.

The Israeli police is guilty of breaches of human rights and international humanitarian law in particular through:

- ▶ **Arbitrary arrests and detentions**⁶
- ▶ Cases of **ill-treatment and torture of Palestinian minors** in interrogation and detention centres as reported by the Committee Against Torture⁷.
- ▶ Infliction of **collective punishment on the Palestinian population**, such as administrative detention, curfews, destruction of houses and electricity cuts, forbidden by international humanitarian law, as enshrined in article 33 of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention⁸.

Violations of international law by the Israeli police are facilitated by G4S training and equipment.

Policity Ltd, the company operated and partially owned by **G4S**, is responsible for at least⁹ 40% of the training instruction of Israeli police. The training provided includes crowd control, house raids, interrogation techniques, target shooting and undercover operations – repression tactics that often entail human rights violations and war crimes committed exclusively against Palestinians.

What is the link between G4S and european institutions?

2008

G4S has provided security services to the buildings of the European Parliament since 2008. Because of the company's involvement in Israel's human rights violations, the European Parliament decided in March 2012 to cut its ties with G4S¹⁰.

2015

In 2015, the company won a contract from the European Commission and has since become the **largest provider of security services for the EU and its institutions**. In Belgium, where most of the European Commission buildings are located, they were awarded around **€37m** for six contracts in 2018. The €37m covers guard services, surveillance, access control and other services and spans some 70 buildings in Brussels¹¹.

2019

In 2019 G4S had secured a four-year contract to provide fire safety and external surveillance at the European Parliament¹².



Securing Injustice

Why is it problematic?

It is unacceptable for the European Institutions to have contractual relations with a firm that is engaged in providing support for activities that constitute violations of international law and have many times been condemned by the international community and the EU itself, which called “on Israel to fully respect international humanitarian law as well as its human rights obligations towards all prisoners, also in light of the Fourth Geneva Convention”¹³.

Despite G4S’ role in human rights abuses in Palestine and across the world, the EU is contracting the company to provide security services in Gabon, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Indonesia, Lebanon, Ukraine and Taiwan among others.

In doing so, the EU is turning a blind eye to the role that G4S plays in Israel’s oppression of Palestinians and human rights abuses all over the world such as:

- ▶ **violent abuses in the prisons and detention centers** it runs (or used to run) in South Africa, the US and the UK, and numerous deaths in custody;
 - ▶ **labour rights violations** at several of its sites including in Malawi, Mozambique and South Africa;
 - ▶ **death of Jimmy Mubenga¹⁴, who was suffocated to death** by three G4S guards while being deported from the UK in 2010. In South Africa, investigations exposed G4S staff using electric shocks¹⁵ and forcible medical injections of antipsychotic drugs at the Mangaung prison.
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To fulfil its obligations under international law, the European Parliament and European Institutions should immediately end their contracts with G4S.

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EUROPEAN COORDINATION OF COMMITTEES AND
ASSOCIATIONS FOR PALESTINE

ECCP – ASBL (Belgian non-profit organization)
Head Office: 115, rue Stevin – 1000 Brussels – Belgium
Tel: + 32 (0) 2 230 28 48
Fax : + 32 (0) 2 231 01 74
Email : eccp.brussels@gmail.com