

A POLICY BRIEF ON

**THE WAR IN PALESTINE:  
HOW EU VALUES THE RIGHTS OF  
SOME MORE THAN OTHERS**



كلية القانون  
College of Law  
جامعة قطر QATAR UNIVERSITY

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**CLD**

مركز القانون والتنمية  
CENTRE FOR LAW & DEVELOPMENT



## INTRODUCTION

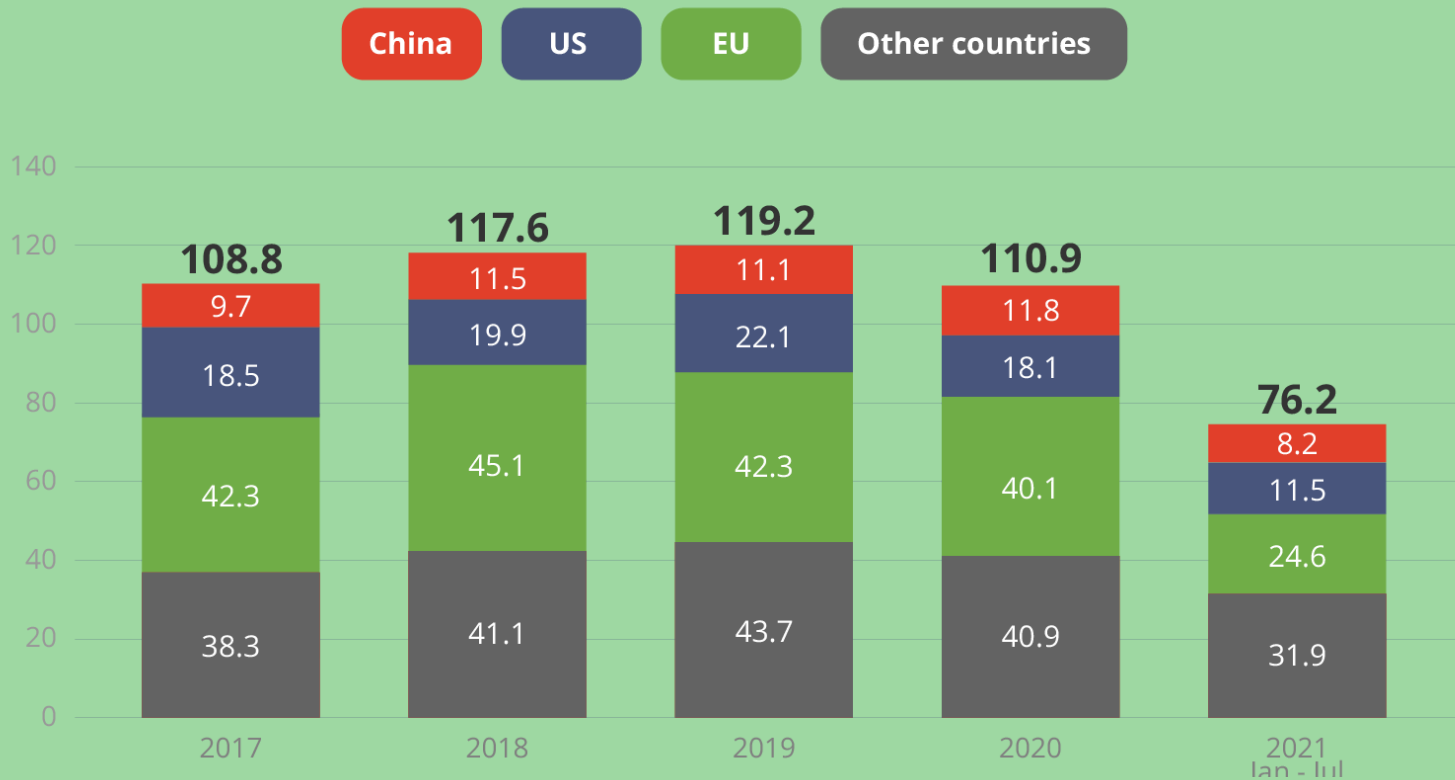
The European Union (EU) prides itself on its stance as a mediator in global conflict. But is this position of mediation reflective of their policies or is it just a veil meant to cover up any hidden biases? Despite the EU's commitment to the protection of human rights for all, some EU member states can be seen aiding and funding the Israeli regime. While there have been basic efforts by the EU to sponsor peace in the region, the recurring flouting of the Oslo Accords by Israel proves these efforts have not been as effective as claimed. This warrants EU to take a more stringent approach that could disincentivise Israel and help protect the rights of the oppressed Palestinian citizens.

The European Union is built on the foundations of fundamental unalienable rights enjoyed by all. Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that

**The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights**

This is the basis of every step the EU should ever take, any action that is against this statement is against the EU principles. Article 3 of the Treaty extends this to apply to any international affair as well, in accordance with the International Humanitarian Law. It is well-established, in theory, that the EU is not to commit any action that violates this principle. But the EU's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict creates a doubt in this notion.

## Scope of Israel's trade with China, the US, the EU, and rest of the world in billions of dollars, excluding diamonds



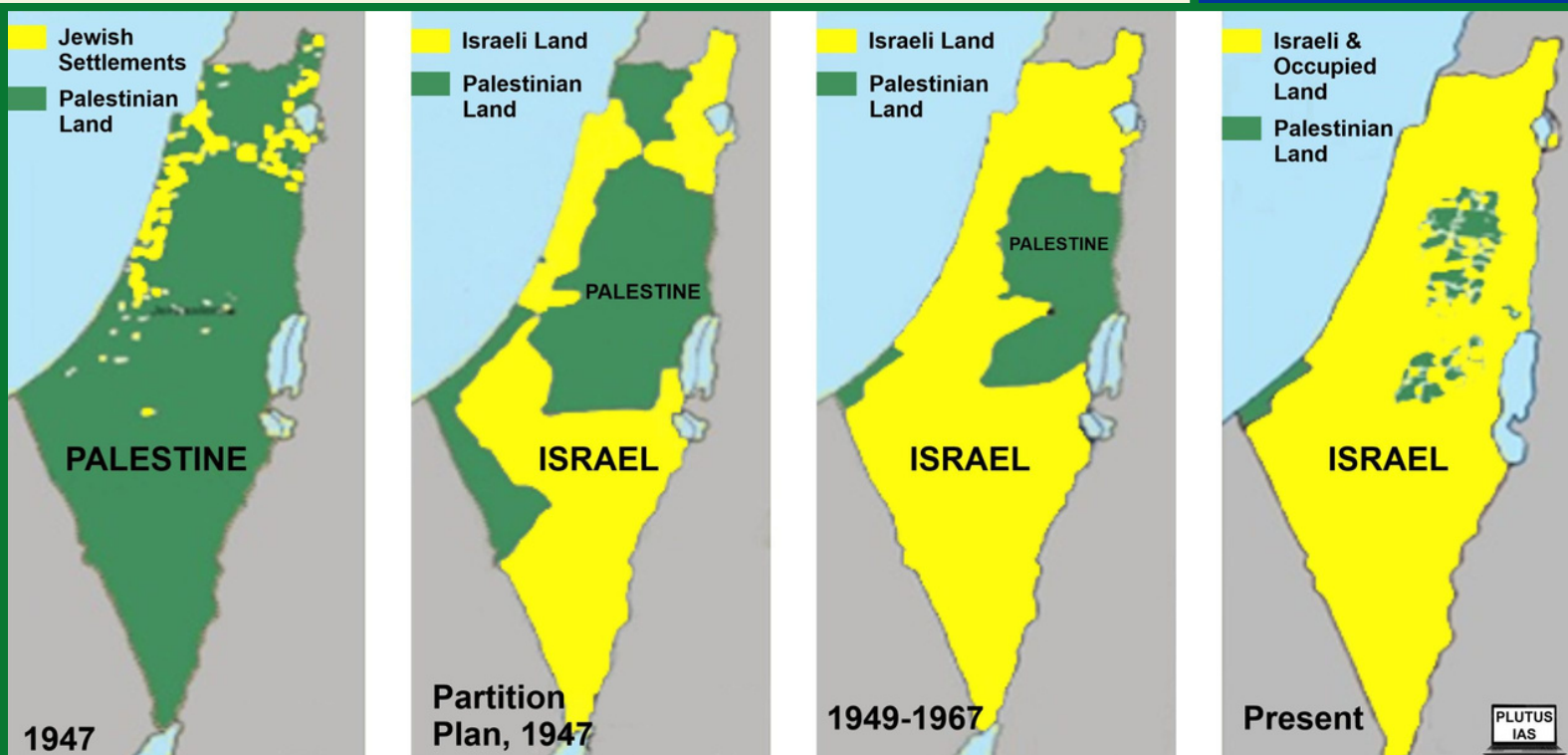
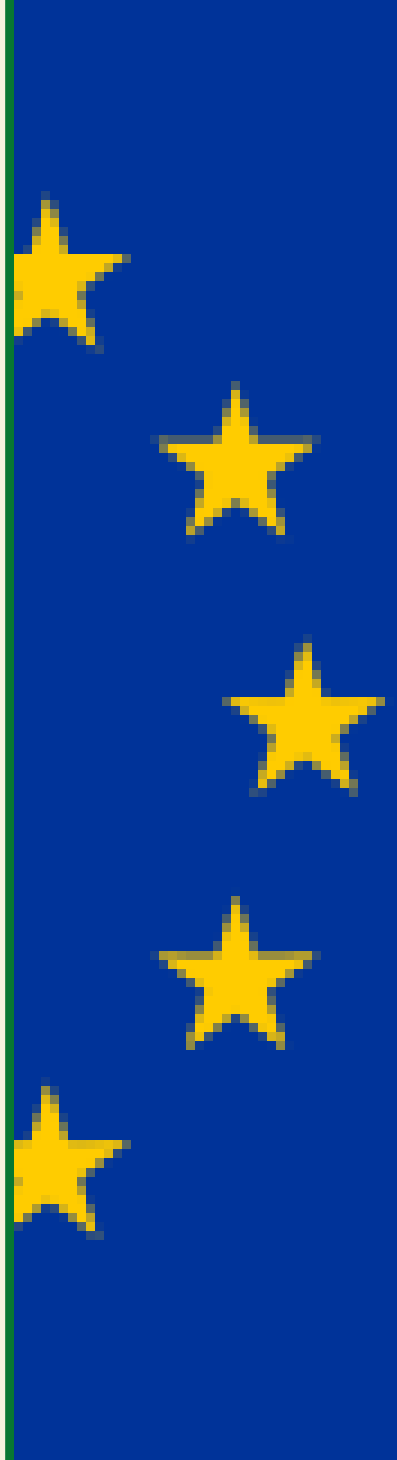
Despite the premise of unbiasedness, the EU remains the primary trade partner for the state of Israel. 31% (€6.3 million) of Israeli exports go to the EU and 41% (€10.3 million) of the imports come from the EU, following a general trend of an increased relationship throughout the years.

Due to this growing interdependence, along with the cultural similarities between the two regions and the fact that the other major trading partner of the EU is the United States which is also in favour of Israel, the EU stands a lot to lose if there were to be any damage in their relationship with Israel or vice versa.

As a consequence, the EU does not have much of a leverage and so remains shy to deploy any decisive action against Israel. The current belief relies on incentives, with the idea being that Israel could be bribed into agreement.

However, even with an increased integration of Israel into the EU sphere of operations, Israeli occupation is on a rise as these incentives do nothing but inform Israel that they have been bestowed with special treatment by the EU when compared to how much harsher the EU has been to similar annexation regimes like Russia that get met with absolute sanctions in a way that Israel has not.

In addition, EU member states like Norway have a total of over €500 million resting in the top 8 Israeli banks, whereas member states like Germany and Italy supply military weaponry to the nation. Given how these soft efforts, growing relationship, and economic funding all enable Israel to continue their expansive operations without much repercussions, it is unjustifiable for the same EU that preaches human right fundamentals to abet a regime responsible for the oppression of over 1.5 million people.



By their very own principles, the EU is required to ensure the protection of every human life, regardless of alliance and economic interest. Profit motivations can not allow the EU to act as the arbitrators of who deserves rights and who does not. This goes beyond just protecting innocent lives to preventing the oppression that jeopardise those lives in the first place.

This requires the EU to treat every oppressive regime equally, if the EU did impose sanctions against the apartheid South Africa, it would only be just for the same action to be taken against Israel. Palestinians have long been denied of a healthy sustainable society. The current Israeli occupation withholds from Palestine enough resources that could double its economy, as per an UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report. This would be extremely valuable to the masses of Palestinians living in poverty in flattened cities.

If the EU has the capability to have any impact on this, its own foundations necessitates it to take proper action to alleviate suffering rather than a safe neutral approach that only enables Israeli exceptionalism.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

1

The EU has to abandon its passive mediator role and instead employ stricter measures like sanctions to disincentivise Israel, using the leverage of being Israel's main trading partner.

2

The EU should actively monitor and enforce its laws are being implemented, holding member states accountable for compromising any human lives through their actions.

3

The EU should advocate for freedom of movement by forcing Israel to end restrictions of travel and deploying EU border guards at crossings to ensure a free flow of trade and aid to Palestinian citizens in need.

4

The EU should provide aid in rebuilding the Palestinian economy, addressing essential needs like infrastructure, healthcare, and education.

## CONCLUSION

The EU bases its on principals of human rights. However, there are questions to be raised in its passive approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Due to alliances and economic ties, the EU is vary of taking stricter measures against Israel, which allows the country to commit oppressive actions. The EU must take initiatives that align with its foundational values through imposing sanctions and aiding the rebuilding of the Palestinian economy



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By:  
**SALIM KHURSHEED**  
(SK211181@QU.EDU.QA)

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