

Carlos Moedas, Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation,  
Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-  
President of the European Commission  
Robert Jan-Smith - Director General for Research and Innovation

Brussels, 24 November 2016

Dear Mr Moedas,  
Dear Mrs Mogherini,  
Dear Mr Jan-Smith,

As Belgian, Spanish, Palestinian and international civil society organizations, we would like to express our concerns to you regarding the Horizon 2020 funded project LAW TRAIN.

Started in May 2015, the LAW TRAIN project is aimed at harmonizing and sharing interrogation techniques between the different countries involved, in order to face new challenges in transnational criminality. The project is coordinated by the Israeli Bar Ilan University and includes the participation of the Israeli Ministry of Public Security, the Federal Public Service Justice in Belgium, the Ministry of Justice of Portugal, the Civil Guard of Spain. In addition to these public institutions, some private actors, including the Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium) are involved. The project, which will run until 30th April 2018, has a 5.095.687,5 € budget, half of which will be transferred to the Israeli institutions involved in the project. At the end of August, the Ministry of Justice of Portugal announced its withdrawal from the project because of its controversial nature.

As you may know, in its fifth periodic review on Israel published in June 2016, the UN Committee against Torture denounced Israel's uses of torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment as well as use of illegal practices during interrogations by the police and prison staff, in particular against Palestinians and migrants. The participation and allocation of funds to the Israel Ministry of Public Security through the LAW TRAIN project is therefore problematic as this entity is in charge of the national police and the prison services, both responsible for serious human rights violations.

Therefore, we would request that you provide us with the following information:

- the details of the human rights impact assessment of the project;
- the details of the concrete human rights safeguards put in place and measures taken to ensure that the project will not directly or indirectly generate or contribute to human rights violations;
- how the project and the interrogation techniques developed under the LAW TRAIN project integrate a human rights dimension and how they are framed to concretely promote the respect for human rights and improve the police records in that regard; the methodology that will be used in the project to assess the effectiveness and impact of the training programmes on the prevention of human rights violations and, in particular, on the prevention and eradication of torture (e.g. how the project will assess its impact in reducing the number of cases of torture), including gender-based violence, and ill-treatment.

The prohibition of torture is a peremptory norm of international law, which creates an obligation for the EU not to facilitate violations of such norms and to actively cooperate to bring violations to an end.

We would also like to highlight the illegality of financing an Israeli entity which is headquartered in Occupied East Jerusalem, namely the Israeli police. This practice is contrary to the differentiation policy, which has been

adopted by the EU to comply with its international obligations. Indeed the violations of peremptory norms of international law by Israel, including the denial of Palestinians' right to self-determination and the extensive destruction and appropriation of property, raise for the EU and the rest of the international community an obligation of non-recognition of the situation resulting from the violations, and subsequently the duty not to engage in activities or render aid or assistance that may amount, lead to or instigate the commission of internationally wrongful acts.

Finally, we have doubts that the project will not be used for military purposes and would like to receive the relevant information in that regard.

Given the serious human rights violations which one of the project's beneficiaries is associated with and the EU obligation of non-recognition of Israel's settlement enterprise, we urge the European Commission and Horizon 2020 to immediately stop funding the LAWTRAIN project.

In light of the concerns expressed above, we request a meeting with you to further discuss the appropriate actions to be implemented.

### Signatory organizations

Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme (Int)

11.11.11 (BE)

Al Haq (Palestine)

Asociacion pro derechos humanos (ES)

Association Belgo-Palestinienne (BE)

Broederlijk Delen (BE)

CNAPD (BE)

CNCD-11.11.11 (BE)

FOS (BE)

Intal (BE)

La Centrale générale-FGTB (BE)

Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (BE)

Médecine pour le tiers monde (BE)

Mouvement Ouvrier Chrétien - MOC (BE)

Organisation Mondiale Contre la Torture (Int)

Palestina Solidariteit (BE)

Pax Christi Vlaanderen (BE)

Solidarité Socialiste (BE)

Vrede vzw (BE)

