



## THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ISRAEL SHOULD IMPLEMENT THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITMENTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE EU-ISRAEL ACTION PLAN

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network in partnership with its member organisations, Adalah, the Arab Association for Human Rights, B'Tselem and the Public Committee Against Torture in Israel held a seminar on The EU-Israel Action Plan within the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP): What is the impact of the EU-Israel Action Plan on Human Rights in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory? on 18 April 2007.

Around 55 people attended the seminar, among them Israeli and European NGOs representatives, 12 representatives of EU member states' embassies and representatives of the European Commission in Tel Aviv. Israeli government's officials were invited but unable to attend.

At the conclusion of the seminar, NGOs called on:

- The EU and Israel to consult and involve civil society in the implementation of the Action Plan and in future plans on a regular and systematic basis.
- The EU and Israel to ensure that benchmarks and a clear timetable be set up to assess the performance and the progress of the human rights components when implementing and reviewing the Action Plan.
- The EU to implement its commitments to mainstream human rights in all cooperation frameworks between the EU and the Israeli government.

During the seminar, the NGOs stressed the deterioration of the human rights situation in Israel. The NGOs raised the issues of the illegality of Israeli settlements and restrictions on freedom of movement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as well as incommunicado detention and discrimination against the Palestinian Arab minority in Israel.

NGOs emphasised the general and vague human rights language within the Action Plan and the lack of formal monitoring mechanisms and transparency. Participants listened with great interest to a representative of an Ukrainian NGO who described cooperation between NGOs and their government to implement the human rights commitments included in the EU-Ukraine Action Plan.

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