

**To whom it may concern,**

Israel's illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories and the Golan Heights has continued for more than 50 years. During this time, Israel has established hundreds of illegal settlements in the territories it occupies. The international community holds that the settlements violate international law. The establishment and continuous expansion of the settlements has caused serious human rights violations in the region, and the human rights situation has deteriorated rapidly over the past year.

Business activities in the settlements enable the maintenance and expansion of the settlements. That is why human rights bodies have taken a stand on the issue. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has stated that, considering the weight of the international legal consensus concerning the illegal nature of the settlements themselves, and the systemic and pervasive nature of the negative human rights impact caused by them, it is difficult to imagine a scenario in which a company could engage in listed activities<sup>1</sup> in a way that is consistent with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and international law. The view of the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner has also been confirmed by the Human Rights Council.

The UN Guiding Principles are an internationally agreed standard for companies' human rights responsibility. Companies must commit to the UN Guiding Principles and require their commercial partners to commit to them as well.

The UN Guiding Principles are currently being transposed into legislation in the European Union. The Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) will require companies to fulfill human rights due diligence included in the UN Guiding Principles. As part of the due diligence, the directive will include obligations to identify, assess, prevent, mitigate and bring to an end harmful human rights impacts. Once possible harmful effects have been identified and, if necessary, prioritized, companies must take appropriate measures to prevent them. Possible prioritization should be based on the severity and probability of adverse effects.

According to our knowledge, your company still has economic activities in Israeli settlements, either directly or through your value chains. We urge you to take into account the illegal nature of Israeli settlements and the statements of human rights bodies about the problematic nature of doing business in the settlements. We urge you:

- To end business relations with illegal Israeli settlements.
- To find out what kind of negative human rights effects you have caused before your withdrawal or what kind of negative effects you have contributed to and remedy them or participate in remedying them.
- To prevent and mitigate negative human rights impacts linked to business relationships, even when you have not contributed to them yourself. In the case of

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<sup>1</sup> For the list of activities see for example OHCHR 30.6.2023  
<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session31/database-hrc3136/23-06-30-Update-israeli-settlement-opt-database-hrc3136.pdf>

Israeli settlements, such responsibility may rise from, for example, trading with a subcontractor that also operates in the settlements.

This letter is an accompaniment to a petition signed by over 7000 people calling on companies to immediately stop doing business in illegal Israeli settlements.

Regards,

**Sonja Finér**  
Executive Director  
Finnwatch ry

