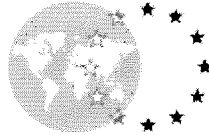


EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



Managing Director

MENA Middle East and North Africa

Brussels, **23 AOUT 2018**
MENA/FG

Dear Mr Forest,

Thank you for forwarding the 12 July letter from 23 Civil Society Organisations addressed to the High Representative on whose behalf I have been asked to reply.

The EU has repeatedly called on all parties for a fundamental change of the political, security and economic situation in the Gaza strip, including the end of the closure and a full opening of the crossing points, while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns.

The EU has undertaken continued efforts to keep the Middle East peace process and the two-state solution high on the international agenda. As part of these efforts, the EU has also kept a clear focus on Gaza, as demonstrated by the latest Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meetings that were held in Brussels in January and March 2018, and by the successful donor conference on the Gaza Central Desalination Plant.

The European Union has reiterated its full support to the efforts by Egypt and the UN to reduce tensions and to alleviate the situation in Gaza, including by enhancing the international response to the current crisis and easing movement and access.

The EU will continue to work, together with our partners, to address the humanitarian situation and to support intra-Palestinian reconciliation to reunite Gaza and the West Bank under one single and legitimate Palestinian Authority.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Gentilini', written in a cursive style.

Fernando Gentilini

Vincent Forest
Advocacy Director
EuroMed Rights
Brussels