

MR 3 - Endringsforslag

Proposed amendment:

This pattern of repression is not limited to Europe. In the United States, authorities have intensified measures to suppress Palestinian solidarity movements, including through excessive use of force against peaceful protesters, the criminalization of advocacy, and targeting of students, universities, and civil society organizations.

These developments raise particular concerns for Norway. Recent high-level meetings between Norwegian officials and U.S. political leaders have taken place amid ongoing attacks on freedom of expression and the rights to protest in the United States. As Norway continues its international engagement, it must be guided by its obligations under international law, ensuring that it neither supports nor legitimizes actions that violate human rights and undermine accountability for grave crimes. We cannot fight against the atrocities in Gaza abroad if our government doesn't uphold the same standards abroad that it claims to defend at home.

Put within the text:

Europe: Stop punishing Palestinian solidarity and start punishing those who commit genocide

At a time where dystopian scenes feel troublingly commonplace, a protest in Berlin's Wittenbergplatz in February– in which marchers called for an end to aggression in the West Bank and an arms embargo on Israel – went even further when police banned the use of any language except German and English.

While protesters sang and chanted in Hebrew and Arabic, they were violently suppressed by police. Arabic music was drowned out by a loudspeaker declaring that “anyone who speaks Arabic endangers public safety.”

This feels unbelievable in a Europe that boasts about its leadership in human rights. Yet unwarranted measures by governments to curtail and punish expressions of solidarity with Palestinians have become increasingly prevalent across Europe in the last two years. In this continued and alarming pattern of repression, Stephen Kapos, and 87-year-old Holocaust

survivor, was among many activists called in for questioning by the Met police in London for partaking in Pro-Palestinian rallies.

According to a report published by Amnesty International last year, several European countries have imposed restrictions on pro-Palestinian protests, citing public order and security concerns. The UK has attempted to ban marches and flagged certain slogans as potential endorsements of terrorism. France implemented a blanket ban on demonstrations, while Germany prohibited specific phrases and rallies. In the Netherlands, parliamentarians faced restrictions on using pro-Palestinian language, and Austria adopted a zero-tolerance policy against related activism.

Peaceful protest is a powerful and public way for people to make their voices heard. It has long been a vital means for advancing human rights around the world. However, in Europe, the right of peaceful assembly is increasingly coming under attack, with state authorities stigmatizing, impeding, deterring, punishing and cracking down on those organizing and participating in peaceful protests.

Since President Trump's inauguration in January, there's an alarming crackdown on Palestinian voices, including the unlawful arrest and detention of Mahmoud Khalil, the absurd proposals to unlawfully and forcibly transfer Palestinians from the occupied Gaza Strip – and his decision to impose sanctions against the International Criminal Court.

European countries have a choice to start upholding international law, or continue down the path of undermining the rule of law and endangering us all in the process. Instead of punishing Palestinians and those expressing Palestinian solidarity, Europe must begin a concerted cooperation effort to prevent, end and punish those who commit acts of genocide and other atrocities.

Europe has long been a fertile ground for manufacturing consent for Israel's apartheid, the illegal occupation of Palestinian territory and now genocide in Gaza. Overly broad and vague counter terrorism laws, increasingly used to suppress freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly across the continent, have been deployed to punish and deter Palestinian solidarity.

In November 2023, Amnesty International warned that the abuse of such laws could “stop speech cold”. Sixteen months later, its chilling effect has seeped into every workplace, home, school and university.

Since the Hamas attacks on 7 October 2023, many European countries have built on this by hastily constructing a web of laws, policies, resolutions and restrictions that serve to legitimize Israel's genocide in Gaza and other grave violations while curtailing efforts to hold the country accountable.

Additionally, the rise in labeling of protests and protesters against Israel's genocide in Gaza as antisemitic is alarming. In her August 2024 report on global threats to freedom of expression, the UN Special Rapporteur Irene Khan documented how the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's "working definition" of antisemitism is inconsistent with international human rights law and undermines the fight against antisemitism. Khan argues that in Europe as well as globally, the definition has been used to restrict criticism of Israeli government policies and actions, and stifle growing calls for an end to the violations Israel is committing against Palestinians. The ability to criticise the actions of a state must always be protected.

We are not asking politician in Europe to demonstrate the bravery of Palestinian health workers, journalists or humanitarians who have continued to work in the face of death, injury, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and torture. We are simply asking them to ensure all victims and perpetrators are treated equally, to uphold the rule of law and to revise laws and policies that dehumanize Palestinians and grant impunity to Israel.

Europe must immediately comply with the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion and its international legal obligations to put an end to Israel's illegal military presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory by September 2025. The first step towards that goal is not to suppress free speech, but by stopping all arms transfers to Israel and introducing a complete ban on trade and business with Israel's illegal settlements.

From restricting protests to overly broad counterterrorism measures, Europe's politicians must also review and tackle the deeply troubling legal landscape that they have constructed that dehumanizes and stigmatizes Palestinians and punishes those who support them, while legitimizing Israel's genocide against Palestinians in Gaza and its violations and crimes in the occupied West Bank.

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These developments raise particular concerns for Norway. Recent high-level meetings between Norwegian officials and U.S. political leaders have taken place amid ongoing attacks on freedom of expression and the rights to protest in the United States. As Norway continues its international engagement, it must be guided by its obligations under international law, ensuring that it neither supports nor legitimizes actions that violate human rights and undermine accountability for grave crimes. We cannot fight

against the atrocities in Gaza abroad if our government doesn't uphold the same standards abroad that it claims to defend at home.

If Palestinian survivors of a genocide are courageous enough to attempt to rebuild their homes and lives, brick by brick, piece by piece, politicians across Europe must at a minimum abide by and defend international law International law must protect everyone – or it protects no one.