

**Question for written answer E-001265/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE) and Véronique De Keyser (S&D)**

Subject: VP/HR - EU policy on the Middle East

In its resolution of 5 July 2012 on EU policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Parliament called on the Council and the Commission to make sure Israel's commitment to respect its obligations towards the Palestinian population under international human rights and humanitarian law is taken into full consideration in the EU's bilateral relations with the country. Also, Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement states that 'Relations between the Parties (...) shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement'. The report entitled 'Trading away peace: How Europe helps sustain illegal Israeli settlements', published in October 2012, concludes that the European position is absolutely clear: Israeli settlements are illegal, constitute an obstacle to peace and threaten to make a two-state solution impossible. However, EU policy in practice actually helps sustain the settlements. It is claimed that the value of EU imports from illegal settlements is EUR 230 million.

1. Is the Vice-President / High Representative familiar with the report entitled 'Trading away peace: How Europe helps sustain illegal Israeli settlement'?
2. How does the Vice-President / High Representative evaluate the report's conclusion that EU policy helps sustain the settlements?
3. Is the report correct in claiming that the EU imported products from the settlements to the value of EUR 230 million? What measures will the Vice-President / High Representative propose in order to make sure that no products from the illegal settlements are imported to the EU?
4. In 2012 we witnessed an intensification of Israeli settlement policy. How will this, particularly in light of Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, influence EU policy towards Israel?
5. To what extent does the EU currently take Israel's lack of commitment to respecting its obligations under international law into consideration in its bilateral relations with Israel? Could you provide some specific examples of how bilateral relations have been modified, for instance as a consequence of the continuation of Israeli settlement policy?