

**Question for written answer E-001208/2023**

**to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy**

Rule 138

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Subject: Transfer of power advancing annexation of the West Bank by Israel

On 23 February 2023 an agreement was signed between Israeli Defense Minister Galant and Bezalel Smotrich, Minister of Finance and additional Minister within the Ministry of Defense, transferring most of the powers of the Civil Administration to Smotrich. The Civil Administration is a military unit responsible for managing civilian aspects of the Israel military occupation of the West Bank.

The transfer of these responsibilities from the military into civilian hands constitutes an explicit and public subordination of the occupied West Bank's management to national and social interests of the State of Israel, in direct contravention of international law. With this move the distinction between the West Bank and the territory of the State of Israel becomes blurred in both institutional and legal terms.

1. Does the EEAS consider this transfer of power an advancement of annexation of the West Bank territory by the Israeli Government, as prohibited under international law, including the UN Charter?
2. Will the EEAS review the legal and political implications of this move on EU's relations with Israel?
3. What appropriate measures will the EEAS take, given the previous statements of the VP/HR clarifying that the EU will not let annexation pass unchallenged?

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