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Press release | 01.04.2026

Israel: Greens/EFA urge EU response to death penalty law

The Greens/EFA Group strongly condemns the Israeli parliament's approval of the death penalty law affecting Palestinians, who were convicted of terrorist attacks. We have requested a plenary debate on the urgent need for the EU to respond to the new law and to continued settler violence and Israel's unlawful imposition of sovereignty over the occupied West Bank.

MEP Villy Søvndal, Greens/EFA rapporteur on the situation in Israel and Palestine, comments:

"Reinstating a discriminative death penalty only targeting Palestinians in an already discriminatory and cruel system - and celebrating it with champagne - is beyond belief. The religious extreme right in Israel is clearly way too powerful.

"We in the EU and the EU leaders need to stop being concerned and just condemn, but stand behind those words with actions. The horrific situation in Gaza, the settlements, violence and destruction in the West Bank and now the death penalty.

"If that is not enough to introduce sanctions, nothing we will ever say about human dignity will ever be listened to again."

MEP Hannah Neumann, Greens/EFA Coordinator in the Foreign Affairs Committee (AFET), comments:

"We strongly condemn the adoption of the death penalty bill in the Knesset. This law is clearly designed to target one group only: Palestinians.

"As Europeans, we must send a clear signal that the adoption of such discriminatory laws, brutally undermining the rule of law in Israel, will have consequences. We welcome and share the deep concern expressed by the Commission, the High Representative, and several Member States — but words are not enough. The EU must finally turn its criticism into action.

"We have long called for a stronger European response to the on-going humanitarian disaster in Gaza and the escalating violence in the West Bank. We once again urge the Commission and Member States to suspend the Association Agreement and impose sanctions on Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich and actors within the violent settler movement."

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