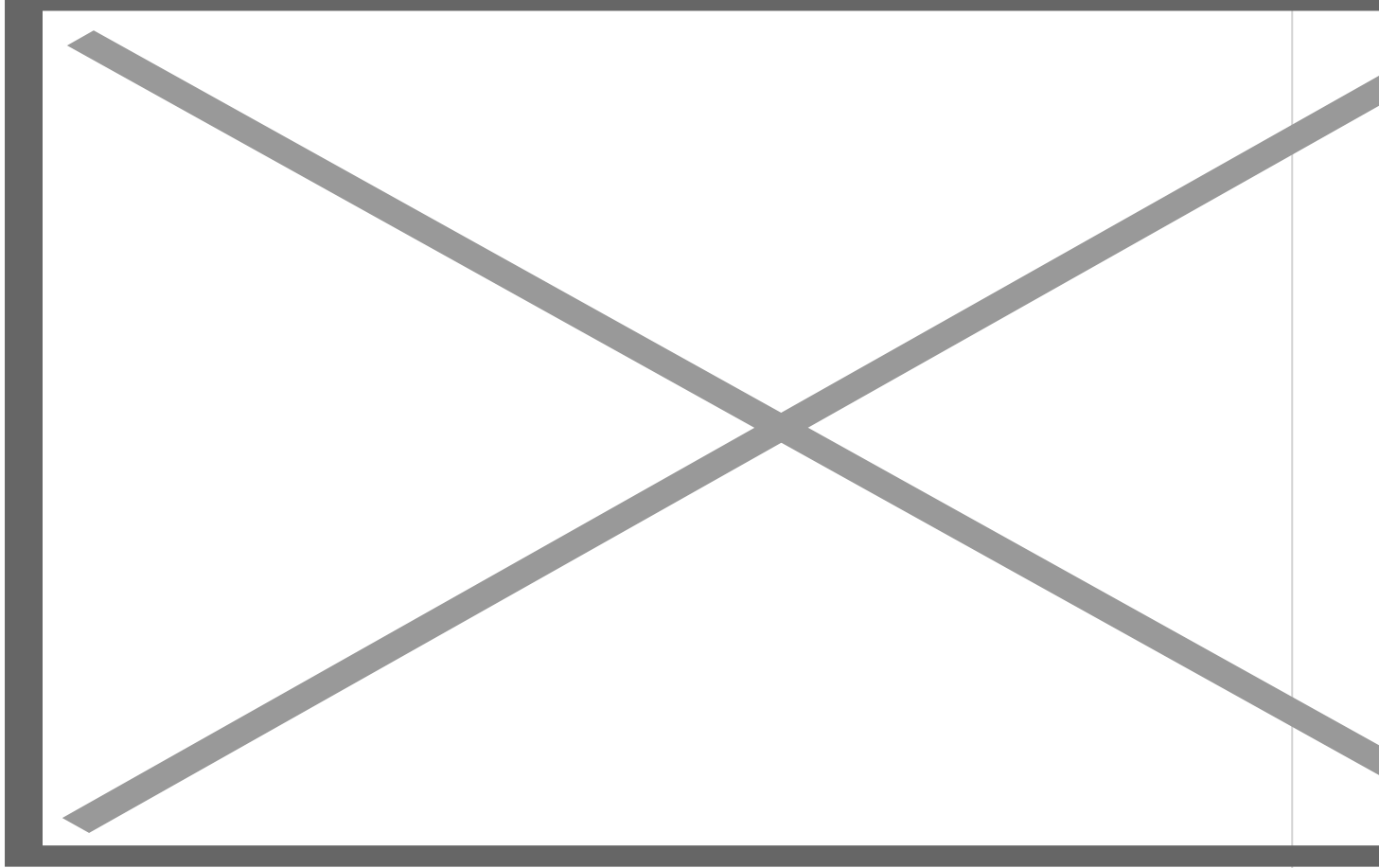


Five former EU foreign ministers describe Israel as apartheid regime

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Israeli forces arrest a Palestinian teenager in the occupied territories.

Brussels, October 30 (RHC)-- In an open letter, published over the weekend, five former European ministers have labeled Israel's policies against Palestinians as "a crime of apartheid," amid the ongoing killings and violence perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people.

"We see no alternative but to acknowledge that Israel's policies and practices against the Palestinians amount to the crime of apartheid," the ministers declared. The ministers criticized the silence of the international community, which "failed to act in the face of serious violations of international law" when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In the letter published by French daily Le Monde, the former EU ministers reminded the EU member states of their "two-state solution" to put an end to the decades-long conflict. "Yet the reality on the ground in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory is moving in the complete opposite direction. And our inaction could have wide-reaching implications in the region as well as for the validity and efficacy of European diplomacy globally," they added.

The officials underscored that the international community has too often remained silent and failed to act in the face of grave violations of international law. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory says it will investigate apartheid charges against the Israeli regime.

The letter was signed by former Foreign Minister of Denmark Mogens Lykketoft; former Foreign Minister of Finland Erkki Sakari Tuomioja; former Foreign Minister of Slovenia Ivo Vajgl; former Foreign Minister of France Hubert Vedrine and British Cabinet Minister Sayeeda Warsi.

This takes place amid current Israeli fears that the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory carries out investigations on whether to recognize Israel as an apartheid regime due to its ongoing atrocities against Palestinians.

The UN Human Rights Council and international human rights organizations have accused Israel of apartheid in the past two years. Israel has killed at least 183 Palestinians since the start of 2022 in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, including 26 since the start of October, the Palestinian Ministry of Health said in a new report earlier this week.

Local and international rights groups have condemned Israel's excessive use of force and "shoot-to-kill policy" against Palestinians, at the time the mainstream media and Western powers turn a blind eye to the atrocities committed by the Israeli occupation forces on a daily basis.

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