

# Alexander De Croo et Didier Reynders worried about the increase in demolitions and confiscations of Palestinian structures

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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Development Cooperation Alexander De Croo and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Didier Reynders are worried about the alarming increase in the number of demolitions and confiscations of Palestinian structures in Area C in the West Bank since the beginning of this year. They are very concerned by the demolitions that took place the day before yesterday, on 2 March 2016, in Khirbet Tana. These demolitions have particularly affected structures funded by the EU and by Belgium through the consortium 'Humanitarian Support to contribute to the protection of Palestinians in the West bank from forcible transfer'.

Among the destroyed structures are schools built by humanitarian agencies to meet humanitarian needs. These humanitarian interventions are conducted in line with international humanitarian law. Minister De Croo and Minister Reynders call on the Israeli authorities to respect international humanitarian law and to guarantee unhindered access to affected civilians to local and international humanitarian organizations.

Minister De Croo and Minister Reynders also refer to the Conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council, in particular those of 14 May 2012, 20 July 2015 and 18 January 2016. In these Conclusions, the European Union expresses its concern about the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian populations in area C and calls on the Israeli authorities to end these destructions and to prevent further demolition or confiscation. The European Union has also confirmed in the Conclusions of July 2015 and January 2016 its opposition to the settlement policy and to the measures taken in this context, such as demolitions and confiscations, expulsions, forced displacement and restrictions of movement and access.

The Ministers will express their concerns to the Israeli authorities. Minister De Croo will soon meet the Israeli ambassador in Brussels on this matter.

## More information:

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