

(circulated on the Hill by office of Senator Cruz 11/4)

This week Sen. Cruz and Sen. Gillibrand intend to send a letter to EU Foreign Chief Federica Mogherini, asking that the EU not implement proposed labeling guidelines that would discourage purchasing Israeli products. Below is a summary of the background, as well as text of the letter...

Summary:

- Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) are seeking signatures from fellow Republican and Democrat Senators on their bipartisan letter to the European Union (EU) Foreign Policy Chief, Federica Mogherini, urging the EU not to implement EU-wide guidelines to pejoratively label certain Israeli products when imported into the EU. According to a [Haaretz report on Monday, Nov. 2nd](#), the EU intends on issuing the guidelines next week on **November 11th**.
- The EU labeling guidelines, which are designed to put enormous economic and diplomatic pressure on Israel, would discourage Europeans from purchasing certain Israeli products, and so serve as a de-facto boycott of Israel and Israeli companies. The labeling guidelines will provide fuel to the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement that seeks to delegitimize Israel, and dim any prospect of a negotiated solution between Israel and the Palestinians.
- The Israeli government is fighting to stop the guidelines from being implemented. Yet in recent months, there have been a number of reports that the EU intends on finalizing the guidelines in the very, very near future. In April, more than half of the foreign ministers of EU countries [sent a letter](#) to EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini urging her to move forward. In June, Israel [reportedly](#) launched a major diplomatic effort to stop or delay its implementation. In early September, Mogherini [announced](#), "The work is close to being finished but it is still ongoing." Just a few days later, the EU Parliament [passed a resolution](#) supporting the initiative by a vote of 525 to 70, with 31 abstentions. And in late September, an EU official stated the guidelines may be finalized in mid-October. As noted above, the EU intends on moving forward **next week**.
- This letter would make it clear that Republicans and Democrats in the United States Congress stand with Israel and against any effort to boycott Israeli goods as has been the long standing policy of the United States. Before the EU enacts this policy, the United States Senate must weigh in as a close ally to Israel and make it clear to the EU why we oppose the labeling guidelines.

Full Letter:

Dear Federica Mogherini,

We, the undersigned Members of the United States Senate, write to express our unequivocal opposition to reports that the European Union (EU) intends to move forward with EU-wide guidelines to pejoratively label certain Israeli products when imported into the EU. In April, more than half of the foreign ministers of EU member states sent a letter encouraging you to proceed with this policy, and members of the EU Parliament subsequently voted to endorse this initiative in September.

As allies, elected representatives of the American people, and strong supporters of Israel, we urge you not to implement this labeling policy, which will discourage Europeans from purchasing these

products and so serve as a de-facto boycott of Israel and Israeli companies. Israel sits on the frontlines in a region that is being engulfed by the forces of radical Islamic terrorism. All around the Middle East, borders are disintegrating amidst the chaos spawned by the rise of ISIS and Iranian-sponsored terrorism. Israel is also enduring a new escalation of Palestinian terrorism, which threatens the basic security of all Israeli people. It is therefore deeply concerning that Europe is considering another proposal to impose more diplomatic and economic pressure on Israel, especially at such a critical and dangerous time when we should be standing unapologetically with Israel.

Anti-Semitism in Europe is currently at its highest level in years as was highlighted by the targeting and murder of Jews in the Hyper Cacher kosher supermarket during January's terrorist attacks in Paris. Therefore, the EU, along with the entire international community, should under no circumstances support a policy that discourages the purchasing of products manufactured by Jewish-owned companies. As the one and only Jewish State, Israel should not be held to a different standard than other countries. Boycotts of Israel inflame anti-Semitism, and endanger Jews worldwide. This labeling campaign, along with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) movement, are efforts to delegitimize Israel, which will provide fuel to this anti-Semitic movement that refuses to accept Israel within any borders. Europe should not play a role in facilitating the boycotting of Israeli goods.

We are also deeply concerned that enacting this policy would lead to the broader boycott of Israel and the isolation of a key ally and the sole true democracy in the Middle East. For decades, it has been the policy of the United States to oppose unsanctioned boycotts by other countries against Israel. In the 1970s, the United States Congress enacted legislation making it illegal for a US company to comply with the Arab League boycott of Israel. Most recently, Congress passed Trade Promotion Authority legislation requiring our President to discourage Europe from enacting any politically motivated policies that would boycott, divest, or sanction Israeli products when negotiating the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. We seek to reinforce directly to you that it is in national security interest of America and our allies to combat boycotting efforts against Israel.

Finally, the entire stated purpose of the EU labeling prejudices the outcome of future negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. This conflict can only be resolved through direct negotiations between the two parties, and must deal with the root causes of the conflict. This policy would ignore one of those, namely the refusal by the Palestinians to recognize Israel as the nation state of the Jewish people. By trying to bypass this process, the EU guidelines dim the prospects of a negotiated solution.

Many European leaders have pledged to fight anti-Semitism and the ongoing campaign to delegitimize Israel. Recently, many European nations joined the United States against an initial draft resolution in UNESCO brought on behalf of the Palestinians that sought to erase history and deny the Jewish connection to Jerusalem and the holiest site in Judaism, the Temple Mount. The resolution not only sought to change the status of the Western Wall as exclusively Islamic by claiming it is part of the al-Aqsa Mosque, but also falsely claimed that Israel was changing the status quo on the Temple Mount. This lie, repeated over and over again by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, has been used to justify the recent brutal wave of terrorism in Israel, including the murder of two dual Israeli-American citizens and the wounding of countless others. It is long past time for the international community to hold those who incite and glorify violence against Jews accountable for their actions.

We appreciate the efforts of the EU against the initial anti-Israel draft resolution in UNESCO. In this spirit, we call upon you not to adopt the proposed labeling guidelines as well.

Sincerely,