



**June 30, 2015**

**Israel/Palestine**

**Contract between Orange and Partner to end by 2017: a victory for human rights**

Orange announced this morning that it has amended its contract with Partner, an Israeli telecommunications company operating in Israeli settlements. This amendment aims at terminating this contract within two years, in exchange for a compensation of tens of millions of euros.

Civil society organizations (CSOs)\*, authors of a report published on May 6, entitled "[Orange's dangerous liaisons in the Occupied Palestinian Territory](#)" welcome this announcement and call upon Orange to implement the termination process within the set time frame. Notwithstanding, CSOs regret that Orange has not publicly recognized the risks of human rights abuses related to its business relationship with Partner, in contrast with other companies and investors who have publicly done so.

Business enterprises have a responsibility to ensure they do not contribute directly or indirectly to the maintenance of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), recognized as illegal under international law, and involving numerous violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. In failing to bring Partner to end its business activities in Israeli settlements, Orange was obliged to end its brand licensing agreement with Partner in order to meet its duty of human rights due diligence.

The aforementioned authors of the Orange report note that it is only due to the pressure exerted by associations and unions, including public questioning of the company, that Orange finally took concrete steps to end its indirect contribution to manifest human rights violations in the OPT. In fact, five years have passed since trade unions first voiced their concerns in regards to this case.

Notably, our organizations are concerned with the inadequate public reaction of the French State in this matter. In light of its international human rights obligations, the French State should provide clearer guidance to business enterprises investing or conducting business activities in the settlements. The [advisory to French businesses](#) published on the site of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June 2014 should be strengthened, explicitly detailing the risks of committing violations of international law by all French companies in operating in the settlements. This notice must be translated into effective implementation so that all business enterprises immediately cease all commercial ties with the settlement, in compliance with international law.

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### **Note**

\* The organizations who authored the aforementioned report are : CCFD-Terre Solidaire, FIDH (Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme), Al Haq, Association France Palestine Solidarité, Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), Ligue des droits de l'Homme (LDH), Union Syndicale Solidaires

The report is available in [French](#) and [English](#).