



Joint Declaration

Israel/Palestine

The controversy around Orange evades the real problem: trade with Israeli settlements

Our organizations, all of them co-authors of the report entitled "["Orange's dangerous liaisons in the Occupied Palestinian Territory"](#)",* denounce the Group's backpedaling in relation to its stated desire to terminate its contract with the Israeli operator Partner, present in the illegal settlements, following unacceptable pressure exerted by the Israeli government. We regret that Orange has not publicly and explicitly recognized the risk the company runs of indirectly contributing to violations of international law due to its business relationship with Partner.

The current controversy, prompted by Orange's CEO statements during his press conference in Cairo on 3 June 2015, is regrettable in that it ignores the main problem: the illegality of Israeli settlements under international law.

Our organizations recall that French companies must respect human rights wherever they operate, and that in the case of armed conflict, such as in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), they must comply with international humanitarian law. Therefore, business enterprises must ensure they do not directly or indirectly contribute to the maintenance of Israeli settlements in the OPT, which are recognized as illegal under international law and entail numerous human rights violations.

We also strongly deplore the French State's lack of support to a company in which it is the largest minority shareholder, and the absence of an explicit affirmation, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' June 5 communiqué, of the government's will to ensure that French companies do not directly or indirectly contribute to maintaining illegal settlements.

In accordance with its international human rights obligations, its foreign policy commitments regarding the OPT, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' advisory to companies regarding business operations in the OPT issued on 24 June 2014, the French government must immediately address Orange regarding its business relationship with Partner.

France has repeatedly condemned Israeli settlement policy and has publicly positioned itself in relation to the illegality of the settlements under international law. We call on the French government to be coherent and to strengthen its support of French companies in their cessation of all business activity in the settlements, whose illegal nature has been confirmed by the entire international community, with the exception of the occupying power.

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Note

* FIDH (Fédération internationale des ligues des droits de l'Homme), CCFD-Terre Solidaire, Al Haq, Association France Palestine Solidarité, Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), Ligue des droits de l'Homme (LDH), and Union Syndicale Solidaires authored the report and are signatories of the above joint declaration. However, please note that Al Haq, while it is also an author of the report, is not a signatory of this joint declaration.