

**Question for written answer E-006745/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Bart Staes (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Employment of Palestinian children in Israeli businesses on the West Bank

Human Rights Watch¹ has exposed the problem which exists on the farms of some Israeli settlers on the West Bank. Between 500 and 2 000 Palestinian children under the age of 18 work on these farms, where they are required to perform exhausting and dangerous work (heavy lifting, working with pesticides, pruning, working in temperatures ranging from 0°C to 50°C, long days) and are poorly paid (USD 13-19 per day). In addition, most of the children are recruited through Palestinian intermediaries, the employers are not known and no official contracts are signed. This is contrary to both Israeli and Palestinian labour legislation and international law, such as the ban on labour by children aged under 15 and the ban on hazardous work under the age of 18.

1. The EU must accept that it is at fault itself as an importer of products from the settlements. Thanks to a 'technical agreement' in the EU-Israel Association Agreement, these products can even be accorded preferential tariff treatment when imported. What steps will the EU take to ban imports of these products, whose production is the result of breaches of human rights?
2. Will the Commission initiate legislation banning imports of products of child labour and requiring labelling of products from the settlements, as requested by 16 Member States?²
3. The EU's current trade policy evidently does not provide enough incentives to prevent child labour in countries with which we have trade agreements. Will the Commission tighten up its policy on child labour?

¹ Report by HRW: http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/isrpal0415_forUPLoad_2.pdf

² Letter: <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/1.652113>