

## Eurodoc Statement in Support of the European Commission's Suggestion to Suspend Israel from Parts of Horizon Europe

The Annual General Meeting (AGM)<sup>1</sup> of the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers (Eurodoc) commends the recent decision by the European Commission to move towards a partial suspension of the state of Israel in activities funded under the Accelerator of the European Innovation Council (EIC)<sup>2</sup>. This part of Horizon Europe funds the scale up of startups, some of which, such as startups within the field of cybersecurity or the development of autonomous task performance of drones, develop technology with clear potential for dual use.

The European Commission bringing into play that Horizon Europe can be used as a sanctioning mechanism is an important step.

In light of the genocide and the human rights violation (including what has been termed a "scholasticide" by UN experts<sup>3</sup>) by Israel in Gaza and the West Bank as documented by the European External Action Service<sup>4</sup> and others, this suspension is an important measure to take. As Germany, France, and the UK stated: "Withholding essential humanitarian assistance to the civilian population is unacceptable."<sup>5</sup> Such a statement has only value if it also results in actions.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN), and the European Convention of Human Rights, as well as the rule of law are foundations of democracy and of the protection of each person's lives. Without acknowledging and safeguarding the human rights of everyone, we undermine them for everyone.

The European Union and its member states have the obligation to ensure that values upon which the union is built – in particular democracy, human rights, rule of law – are upheld. If they are not consistently upheld, they are hollowed out. Thus, these values must extend to regulate the access of non member states' participation in programmes such as Horizon Europe within the union.

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of democracy and a fundamental value of European higher education and research. Without the safeguarding of human rights, academic freedom cannot be protected. However, academic freedom is not the right of *states* to participate in international collaborations, such as the Horizon Europe programme.

It is crucial that the research community in Europe steps up in supporting the European Commission to create a majority among the member states.

Eurodoc calls on the member states to act on the European Commission's suggestion but indeed to move towards a full suspension of the State of Israel from all the research programmes of the Horizon Europe framework programme.

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Signed by **the Eurodoc AGM 2025, the board of Eurodoc 2024/2025 and the board of Eurodoc 2025/2026.**

**Eurodoc, the European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers**, is a grassroots federation of 28 national associations of early career researchers (ECRs) from 26 countries across Europe. Eurodoc was established in 2002 and is based in Brussels. As a representative of doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level, Eurodoc engages with all major stakeholders in research, higher education, and innovation in Europe.



<sup>1</sup> *The highest decision making body in Eurodoc*

<sup>2</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/4f1efc70-7c14-4cac-be2e-7f57f2fce672\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/4f1efc70-7c14-4cac-be2e-7f57f2fce672_en)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/04/un-experts-deeply-concerned-over-scholasticide-gaza>

<sup>4</sup> <https://sciencebusiness.net/news/european-commission-wants-suspend-israel-parts-horizon-europe>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/aktuelles/e3-leaders-declaration-on-the-situation-in-gaza-and-the-west-bank-2370758>