

Complaint against AGREXO, CAL and LACHS

“I wish to file a complaint against the companies Agrexco Ltd, LACHS and CAL, due to their involvement in handling stolen goods and involvement in or complicity to war crimes.”

These companies import goods which are obtained through crime or misdemeanor, more concretely agricultural goods grown in Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

The Israeli company Agrexco buys and exports the majority of the agricultural products in the settlements in the Jordan Valley and is involved in the export of agricultural goods from other settlements. In the Jordan Valley, Agrexco runs 3 packaging companies in the settlements Massu'a, Netiv Hagedud and Bega'ot and in this way directly participates in the economy of the settlements. Agrexco gives directions to farmers in the settlements, e.g. relating to their packaging.

Agrexco exports these agricultural goods to the Benelux via Bierset (Liège) airport. The supply by air is facilitated by the airline company CAL. The Belgian company LACHS, a subsidiary of Agrexco (50%) and CAL (50%) takes care of the freight handling in Bierset. The further distribution in Belgium and the Netherlands is facilitated by Agrexco via its branch in Schiedam in the Netherlands and for the flowers via Aalsmeer, also in the Netherlands. Agrexco is active in Belgium through its trade representatives.

The Israeli settlements are situated in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, in violation of International Humanitarian Law. Article 49 of the 4th Convention of Geneva states: 'The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.' The settlements are a grave violation of the Convention under art 147, which is declared as a war crime in Belgian criminal law (art 136quater, 31°Sw).

These settlements are developed on land that has been confiscated from the local Palestinian population and keep on expanding with the confiscation of territory by the settlers, supported by the Israeli army. The local Palestinian population is deprived of its own water resources and the water supply is monopolised by the settlements.

The majority of the water resources in the Jordan Valley go to the settlements, leaving too little for a viable level of agriculture by the local Palestinian population. The Palestinian villages are also under constant threat of destruction by the Israeli army. The village Al Farasiya, for example, has been nearly completely demolished twice in 2010.

The 4th Geneva Convention (art 53) states: 'Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.' The confiscation and destruction for the creation of the settlements, is not rendered absolutely necessary by military operations, and is carried out on a large scale, unlawfully and deliberately. These acts are a grave violation of the Convention under art 147, which is declared as a warcrime in Belgian criminal law (art 136quater, 31°Sw).

The agricultural goods grown on these settlements are therefore goods obtained through crime or misdemeanor. Agrexco, supported by LACHS and CAL, buys these goods and organizes the distribution in the Benelux. This is tantamount to handling stolen goods, which is a criminal offence under art 505 Sw. (B).

Agrexco is also directly involved in the aforementioned war crimes, which these products are derived from, through the activities of its packaging companies in the settlements.”