

Airbus Response to the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

February 08, 2024

Thank you for your invitation to respond to allegations related to ‘restricting imagery of the Gaza Strip in Palestine negatively impacting the ability of journalists and people to access critical information after New York Times reported on Israeli tank positions based on satellite images.’

Airbus is firmly committed to conducting business ethically, based on its company values and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. As part of this commitment, Airbus supports the principles of the UN Global Compact which includes respect for human rights. In addition, we constantly monitor changes to international law to ensure that all sales are in compliance with any applicable legal requirements with regard to transactions with countries under the UN, EU, UK and US sanctions.

With regards to the Earth observation satellites assets operated by Airbus, we are subject to French and German laws governing satellite imagery data collection and dissemination, including the 2008 French Law on Space Operations. Such laws impose strict limitations on what can be done with satellite images and binding restrictions on the disclosure of any related information to unauthorised personnel on the application of these laws.

We would like also to stress that for decades Airbus has been active in supporting disaster monitoring. For example through the French Space Agency (CNES) Airbus provides imagery to the International Charter Space and Major Disasters (<https://www.airbus.com/en/newsroom/stories/2023-09-disasters-how-earth-observation-satellites-help-guide-emergency-workers>). Airbus also delivers such support directly to national entities when there is a crisis (e.g. Morocco after the last earthquake) as well as international bodies (including UNOOSA, UNOSAT).