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*Plenary sitting*

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7.9.2015

B8-0844/2015

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the EU's role in the Middle East peace process  
(2015/2685(RSP))

**Victor Boştinaru, Richard Howitt, Eric Andrieu, Nikos Androulakis, Zigmantas Balčytis, Hugues Bayet, Brando Benifei, Goffredo Maria Bettini, José Blanco López, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Biljana Borzan, Nicola Caputo, Andi Cristea, Miriam Dalli, Viorica Dăncilă, Monika Flašíková Beňová, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Enrico Gasbarra, Adam Gierek, Neena Gill, Maria Grapini, Theresa Griffin, Roberto Gualtieri, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Anna Hedh, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Afzal Khan, Jeppe Kofod, Kshetu Kyenge, Arne Lietz, Javi López, Louis-Joseph Manscour, David Martin, Marlene Mizzi, Alessia Maria Mosca, Victor Negrescu, Norbert Neuser, Demetris Papadakis, Tonino Picula, Kati Piri, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Peter Simon, Tibor Szanyi, Claudia Tapardel, Marita Ulvskog, Elena Valenciano, Julie Ward**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the EU's role in the Middle East Peace Process (2015/2635(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Middle East peace process, in particular those of 17 December 2014 on recognition of Palestine statehood<sup>1</sup>, of 18 September 2014 on Israel-Palestine after the Gaza war and the role of the EU<sup>2</sup>, and of 5 July 2012 on EU policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on the Middle East peace process of 20 July 2015,
- having regard to the statement by Vice-President/High Representative (VP/HR) Federica Mogherini on the formation of the new Israeli Government of 7 May 2015, and to the statements by her spokesperson on the arson attack in the West Bank of 31 July 2015 and on the recent Israeli decisions for further settlement expansion of 29 July 2015,
- having regard to the local EU statement on demolitions in Area C and on construction work on the separation barrier at Cremisan of 24 August 2015,
- having regard to the joint statement on EU support to UNRWA by the VP/HR, the Commissioner for neighbourhood policy and enlargement negotiations, Johannes Hahn, and the Commissioner for humanitarian aid and crisis management, Christos Stylianides, of 19 August 2015,
- having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the State of Israel, of the other part,
- having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Interim Association Agreement on trade and cooperation between the European Community, of the one part, and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of the other part,
- having regard to relevant UN General Assembly and UN Security Council resolutions,
- having regard to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949,
- having regard to the ‘Diplomatic Outline for Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Steps for creating a diplomatic horizon and generating positive momentum toward an agreement’, presented by Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Yehiel Hilik Bar on 27 July

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2014)0103.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2014)0029.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 349 E, 29.11.2013, p. 82.

2015,

- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the 2013-2014 initiative of US Secretary of State John Kerry and the 2014 summer war in the Gaza Strip have been followed by another stalemate in the Middle East Peace Process between Israelis and Palestinians; whereas efforts are being made in the UN Security Council to resume the peace process; whereas Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Yehiel Hilik Bar presented, with the support of prominent leaders of the Israeli opposition, a ‘Diplomatic Outline for Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Steps for creating a diplomatic horizon and generating positive momentum toward an agreement’ in July 2015;
- B. whereas the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues to have an impact on the whole Middle East; whereas the violent crisis in Syria, the rise of the so-called Islamic State, increasing radicalism and the spread of terrorism in the Middle East are creating significant security threats for Israel and the entire region and further aggravating the suffering of Palestinians, but are also creating shared interests between the Arab states and Israel, while the nuclear deal with Iran offers a unique momentum for the peace process, which should not be missed;
- C. whereas the VP/HR, who made her first official visit abroad in this capacity to Israel and to Palestine in November 2014, has demonstrated her personal commitment to renewing and intensifying the EU’s engagement in the Middle East peace process; whereas Fernando Gentilini has been appointed the new EU Special Representative for the Middle East peace process; whereas the EU, despite its ambition and commitment to play an autonomous role in this field, has yet to develop a comprehensive and coherent vision of its engagement in the Middle East peace process, which should reflect the rapidly changing regional context;
- D. whereas Parliament has repeatedly expressed its support for the two-state solution, with the State of Israel within secure and recognised borders and an independent, sovereign, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side-by-side in peace and security along the 1967 borders, with mutually agreed land swaps and Jerusalem as capital of both states; whereas most of the key parameters of the two-state solution are known from previous negotiations between both sides;
- E. whereas an estimated 600 000 Jewish settlers live in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem; whereas the continued demolition of Palestinian homes and displacement of Palestinian families, the restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians and on their access to agricultural lands, Jewish settler violence, the building of the separation barrier beyond the Green Line and the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources by Israel, as the occupying power, in this area constitute a clear violation of international law and a fundamental threat to the two-state solution;
- F. whereas, according to the Palestinian Monitoring Group, Jewish settlers have carried out more than 11 000 attacks against Palestinians in the West Bank since 2004; whereas, according to Israeli Human Rights organisation Yesh Din, only 1.9 per cent of cases of settler violence brought before the courts between 2005 and 2014 ended in successful prosecution;

- G. whereas the status of Jerusalem remains a key issue in the Middle East peace process; whereas the EU and the international community have never accepted the unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel; whereas Palestinians living in East Jerusalem continue to suffer from the lack of a secure legal residency status, the confiscation of their land and systemic discrimination in access to public services, planning and building and access to religious places and sites as a result of Israeli Government policies aimed at changing the demographic makeup of the area;
- H. whereas the number of Palestine refugees, another key issue in the peace process, currently stands at almost 5 million according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the vast majority of whom are second- or third-generation refugees;
- I. whereas Palestinian unity is an essential part of the Middle East peace process and a necessary condition for the two-state solution; whereas, however, it continues to be undermined by intra-Palestinian political tensions and by the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip and the lack of effective authority of the Palestinian Authority in this area;
- J. whereas the Gaza Strip, de facto controlled by Hamas, has been under blockade since 2007; whereas this blockade has destroyed its economy, leading to high unemployment and a lack of basic goods, and is having a strong psychological impact on the population, especially with regard to young people; whereas many children in Gaza have already lived through three wars and suffer from the post-traumatic effects thereof; whereas the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has been further aggravated by the 2014 summer war and the insufficient entry of reconstruction materials into the area; whereas the EU has repeatedly condemned the rocket attacks from Gaza into Israeli territory and called for the effective prevention of arms smuggling into the Strip;
- K. whereas 5 700 Palestinian detainees and prisoners – including 160 children, 26 women and 400 administrative detainees – are held in Israeli jails; whereas 10 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, three of whom are under administrative detention, are detained in Israeli prisons; whereas, on 30 July 2015, the Knesset adopted the Force-Feeding Law, which authorises the forcible feeding of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike;
- L. whereas civil society actors, human rights organisations, peace campaigners, artists, writers, academics and public intellectuals on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides are an important part of the social and political fabric of their respective communities and are crucial to grassroots democratic movements for peace; whereas a diversity of voices and narratives, a dynamic civil society and an inclusive public debate can strengthen democratic institutions on both sides, helping to bring peace and reconciliation closer;
- M. whereas UNRWA – which is delivering vital services to Palestine refugees in the occupied Palestinian Territory and also in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria – has been facing the most severe funding crisis in its history; whereas the EU and its Member States remain UNRWA’s largest donor, covering almost 40 % of total support received by the agency;
1. Is deeply concerned at the persisting stalemate in the Middle East peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, and calls for the resumption of credible peace efforts between both sides without delay, based on a clear commitment by both parties to

refrain from any violation of international law, with the aim of achieving genuine and tangible results in the framework of a set timetable;

2. Supports the ongoing efforts in the UN Security Council, notably the initiative taken by France, to resume peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians through a resolution setting a framework and a timetable for this process; calls, however, for a comprehensive European peace initiative, should the current stalemate in the peace process persist, which could be presented in an international peace conference, with the participation of both sides and all relevant regional and international actors; encourages the establishment of an International Support Group as announced in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015; takes note of the diplomatic outline presented by Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Yehiel Hilik Bar as an important contribution to peace efforts;
3. Reiterates its strong support for the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the State of Israel within secure and recognised borders and an independent, sovereign, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side-by-side in peace and security and mutual recognition along the 1967 borders, with mutually agreed land swaps, and Jerusalem as capital of both states;
4. Stresses that preserving the viability of the two-state solution through concrete action and ensuring full respect for the rights of the local population must be an immediate priority for the EU and the international community; looks forward to the launching of the EU's structured dialogue with Israel on the situation in the West Bank and the preservation of the two-state solution, which should also cover the issue of settlements;
5. Stresses again that non-violent means are the only way to achieve peace between Israelis and Palestinians through a negotiated final status agreement ending all mutual claims; condemns all acts of violence attacking or endangering civilians on both sides; reiterates its strong commitment to the security of Israel; continues to support Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' policy of non-violent resistance;
6. Underlines the fact that any lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved in a regional context with the active and continuing support of the international community; stresses, in this connection, the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative, and calls for an official Israeli response to the initiative; calls for the involvement of all relevant regional stakeholders in the peace process, in particular the Arab League, as well as Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, which have a particular interest in border and refugee issues;
7. Emphasises that it is high time for the EU to play a prominent political role in the Middle East peace process; welcomes the personal commitment of the VP/HR and strongly supports her efforts in this regard; welcomes the EU's commitment, as expressed in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015, to work actively on a renewed multilateral approach to the peace process in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, and to engage in joint work with regional partners on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative; stresses, however, that the EU should not only engage but play a leading role in this process, in close cooperation with other key international actors, by following a clear and consistent policy embedded in a broader strategy towards the shifting geopolitical order in the Middle East;

8. Urges the VP/HR to make effective use of all existing EU instruments, including positive and negative incentives, which provide a means of leverage on Israel and on the Palestinians in order to achieve the two-state solution; stresses that the future development of the EU's relations with both Israel and the Palestinians should be conditioned on a clear commitment and tangible progress towards peace and respect for international law; calls, in this spirit, for continued, full and effective implementation of all relevant EU legislation and guidelines, as well as the EU's bilateral agreements with both sides, including Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement and the EU-PLO Interim Association Agreement;
9. Recalls the commitment expressed by the Foreign Affairs Council in its conclusions of 13 December 2013 – a commitment reiterated in various EU conclusions and statements over the past two years – stating the following: ‘the EU will provide an unprecedented package of European political, economic and security support to both parties in the context of a final status agreement. In the event of a final peace agreement the European Union will offer Israel and the future state of Palestine a Special Privileged Partnership including increased access to the European markets, closer cultural and scientific links, facilitation of trade and investments as well as promotion of business to business relations. Enhanced political dialogue and security cooperation will also be offered to both states’;
10. Stresses that no EU funding to Israeli, European or other entities may be used in a way that directly or indirectly contributes to the building or expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, or to Israeli activities violating international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory; welcomes, in this connection, the Commission Guidelines of 19 July 2013 on the eligibility of Israeli entities and their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards, and calls for the full implementation thereof; stresses the responsibility of the relevant EU authorities in ensuring that no EU funding to Palestinians can be directly or indirectly diverted to terrorist organisations or activities;
11. Is determined to strengthen its cooperation with Israeli and Palestinian political and civil society actors showing a genuine commitment to achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East; recalls its decision to launch a ‘Parliamentarians for Peace’ initiative as a forum to intensify its dialogue with democratically elected members of the Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council;
12. Stresses the potential of Arab citizens of Israel to play an important role in achieving peace between Israelis and Palestinians, while noting the rise of the Joint Arab List as the third political force in the Knesset, with many votes also from Jewish Israeli citizens; stresses that the two-state solution must guarantee full respect for the dignity and the individual and collective rights of ethnic and religious minorities, as equal citizens of their countries, in both states; encourages Israel, in this spirit, to work towards a broader integration of Arab citizens in the public sector as well as socially, economically and politically; underlines also the importance of consulting the religious leadership on both sides throughout the peace process;
13. Recognises that grassroots people-to-people dialogue will be an inevitable part of a

viable and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians; calls for EU action to strengthen civil society organisations, human rights organisations, peace campaigners, artists, writers, academics and public intellectuals who seek to promote dialogue, cultural exchange, peace building, people-to-people contact and cultural exchange on both sides; calls also for EU action to encourage Israeli-Palestinian intercultural exchange and people-to-people dialogue among young people, including in educational projects, sports and arts initiatives, as well as youth leadership programmes;

14. Condemns Israel's continued illegal settlement building and expansion activities in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, and the recent announcement made by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the construction of 300 new settlement units in Beit El and 500 units in East Jerusalem, as well as the demolition of 142 Palestinian-owned homes and other infrastructure in Area C and in East Jerusalem in August 2015 alone, including 16 donor-funded structures, leading to the displacement of 201 Palestinians, among them 121 children, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); stresses again that Israeli settlement construction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory is illegal under international law, goes against the spirit of peace and constitutes a major obstacle to peace efforts; deplores the demolition of projects funded by the EU and its Member States in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and encourages the EU and the Member States to find an appropriate solution with Israel regarding the compensation for destroyed or confiscated assets financed by European taxpayers;
15. Welcomes the EU's commitment – in the spirit of differentiation between Israel and its activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory – to ensure that all agreements between the EU and Israel unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, as reiterated in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015; calls for the correct labelling of Israeli settlement produce on the EU market, in line with existing EU legislation and the EU's longstanding policy in this regard;
16. Expresses its deep concern – recalling its resolution of 5 July 2012 – at the further deteriorating situation of the Palestinian population in the West Bank, in particular in Area C and in East Jerusalem, due to continued Israeli settlement building and expansion activities, restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians, the demolition of Palestinian homes and displacement of Palestinian families, Jewish settler violence, the building of the separation barrier beyond the Green Line and the exploitation of Palestinian natural resources by Israel, as the occupying power, which threaten the viability of the two-state solution; calls on the Israeli authorities to stop and prevent the forcible transfer of the Palestinian population and the demolition of Palestinian houses and infrastructure, including in Abu Nawar and Susiya villages;
17. Condemns in the strongest terms the recent attacks by Jewish settlers against Palestinians, in particular the killing of Ali Dawabshah, an 18-month-old Palestinian toddler, and his father and mother in the village of Duma, and expresses its condolences; is deeply concerned at increasing settler violence in the West Bank, which is directly linked to the settlement policy of the Israeli Government; welcomes the statements made by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in which they condemned the attack against the Dawabshah family and

called it a terrorist act, but reminds Israel of its full responsibility to protect the Palestinian population in the occupied territory against the attacks and harassment by Jewish settlers, and to bring all perpetrators of settler violence to justice;

18. Reiterates its support for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people; continues to support the recognition of Palestinian statehood, as a crucial step in unblocking the stalemate in the Middle East peace process, and the mutual recognition by Israel and Palestine as part of the final status agreement; welcomes Palestine's membership of the International Criminal Court;
19. Reiterates its call for genuine Palestinian unity, which is an essential part of the Middle East peace process; regrets the recent setbacks in the Palestinian reconciliation process, following the partial reshuffle of the national consensus government in late July 2015; notes President Mahmoud Abbas' announcement about his stepping down as head of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, along with a number of members of the PLO Executive Committee; reiterates its call for presidential and parliamentary elections in Palestine, which should strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the Palestinian political leadership, contribute to intra-Palestinian reconciliation and reduce the political influence of extremist forces, including Hamas;
20. Reiterates its call for the urgent reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Gaza Strip after the 2014 summer war, which must be a humanitarian aid priority for the EU and the international community; commends the heroic work of UNRWA in this regard; calls on international donors to fulfil the pledges which they made at the 2014 October Cairo Conference;
21. Calls for an immediate end to the blockade of the Gaza Strip, which is a collective punishment of the local population, and for the economic revival of the area, as the current status quo is unsustainable and plays into the hands of extremists; reiterates that the stability and prosperity of Gaza serves Israel's own interests and security; welcomes the recent positive steps taken by Israel in easing the blockade, encourages Israel to continue on this path and on the Palestinian Authority to respond positively; underlines that putting an end to the blockade of Gaza, while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns, should remain high on the agenda of the EU's bilateral relations with Israel;
22. Urges the Palestinian Authority again to assume its government function in the Gaza Strip, as a prerequisite for a sustainable political consolidation of the area; welcomes the EU's commitment, as reiterated in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015, to support these efforts, including through the reactivation and possible extension in scope and mandate of its EUBAM Rafah and EUPOL COPPS missions;
23. Calls for an immediate and definitive end to the firing of rockets from the Gaza Strip into Israeli territory and to all other acts of terrorism against Israel originating from this area; stresses again that full compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law by both state and non-state actors, including their accountability, is a cornerstone for achieving lasting peace and security between Israelis and Palestinians, and in the Middle East as a whole;
24. Calls again for the release of all Palestinian political prisoners, in particular members of the Palestinian Legislative Council; calls for full respect for the rights of Palestinian

detainees and prisoners in Israeli jails, including of those on hunger strike; expresses its concern about the Force-Feeding Law adopted by the Knesset on 30 July 2015, and stresses that this law must be implemented in strict compliance with international human rights law and standards;

25. Expresses its deep concern at UNRWA's serious funding crisis; calls for increased EU financial support for UNRWA and urges all other donors to step up their funding for the agency, but calls also for the underlying core issue of Palestine refugees to be addressed; commends and congratulates UNRWA for its extraordinary efforts which made it possible to declare the 2015/2016 school year open for Palestinian refugee pupils;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice President of the Commission / High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, the parliaments and governments of Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Knesset, the President and Government of Israel, the Palestinian Legislative Council and Palestinian Authority, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the parliaments and governments of Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA.