

**Question for oral answer O-000104/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the S&D Group

Subject: EU policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem

EU heads of mission recently presented two landmark reports, including policy recommendations, on the situation in the occupied Palestinian Territory: a report on 'Area C and Palestinian State Building' in July 2011, and the latest Jerusalem Report in January 2012. These documents, both leaked to the press, once again reveal alarming developments in the areas concerned. In Area C, where the 310 000 Israeli settlers greatly outnumber the 150 000 Palestinians, the Palestinian presence continues to be undermined by the expansion of settlements (the municipal areas of the settlements cover 9.3 % of West Bank territory, with settlement infrastructure in general dominating more than 40 % of it), administrative measures, the planning regime imposed by the occupying power (in practice, Palestinian construction is only allowed in less than 1 % of Area C, most of which is already built up), and other severe restrictions. Some 196 000 Israelis are living in settlements inside East Jerusalem, where house demolitions, the eviction of Palestinians, administrative restrictions relating to residency status, the separation wall, the permit regime and inequities in the education and health systems all have a significant adverse impact on the daily lives of Palestinian residents. The prolonged closure of numerous Palestinian institutions also remains a key concern. Taken together, these elements are destroying the prospect of a two-state solution (two states living side by side in peace and security on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states), which is a cornerstone of the EU's policy on the conflict. Moreover, the destruction by Israel of infrastructure projects in the area, several of which are funded by the EU and its Member States, is further undermining and hindering the EU's efforts in this field.

- What will be the Commission's short- and long-term response to the findings and policy recommendations of the above-mentioned reports, with the aim of keeping the two-state solution alive?
- What measures will the Commission take to ensure that Israel honours its obligations under international law and international human rights law in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem?
- What steps will the Commission take to avoid further destruction of infrastructure projects financed by the EU and its Member States in the area?

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