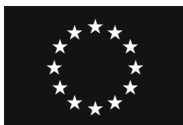


EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council

REPORT

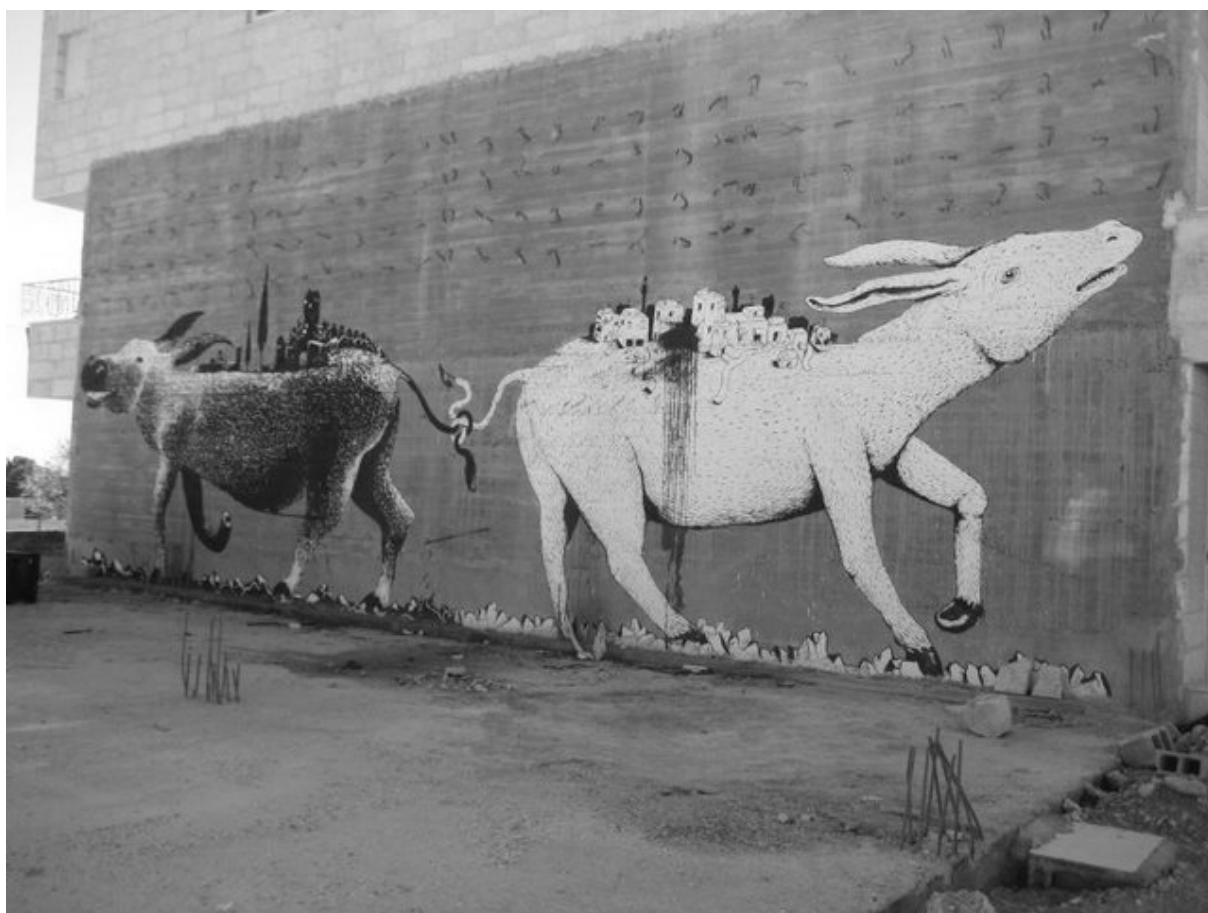
by Kyriacos Triantaphyllides

Chairman of the

Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council



**Extraordinary visit
11-13 February 2009
Ramallah, Gaza and Jerusalem**



INTRODUCTION

From 11 to 13 February 2009 a working group from the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council visited Ramallah, Gaza and Jerusalem.

For this extraordinary visit the Delegation, led by its Chairman, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE, CY), consisted of Proinsias De Rossa (PSE, IE), Frieda Brepoels (EPP-ED, BE), Chris Davies (ALDE, UK), Jill Evans (Verts/ALE, UK) and Luisa Morgantini (GUE, IT).

The visit, which was given exceptional authorisation by the Conference of Presidents, took place within the particular context of the military offensive carried out by the Israeli forces between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009 in the Gaza Strip.

The Members of the European Parliament had already reacted to this dramatic situation:

- officially in a resolution adopted on 15 January 2009 calling, in particular, for an immediate and reciprocal ceasefire and for assistance for the emergency humanitarian measures,
- unofficially through the presence on the ground, in Rafah, throughout the duration of the operation, of a number of MEPs who wished to observe the situation.

The Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council, with its legitimate right to maintain contact with the elected representatives of the Palestinian Legislative Council from all the political groups, just as it had done during its October 2008 mission, wanted to visit the area to verify with its contacts the conditions for the necessary national reconciliation and to look at the situation following the military operation and the measures to be taken.

The Delegation's visit was due to be followed, from 23 to 25 February, by a visit by a delegation from the Euromed Parliamentary Assembly, led by President Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the Parliamentary Assembly.

The mission of the Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council took place over three days, in Ramallah and in Gaza, and was divided between information meetings (I), political discussions (II) and visits to the scenes of the events (III).



I – INFORMATION MEETINGS

Despite the brevity of the visit, the Delegation managed to gather a considerable amount of information from the representatives of the European Union, the United Nations agencies and certain Palestinian bodies.

1 – Meetings with the representatives of the European Union (ECTAO, ECHO, TROIKA)
(Jerusalem, 11 February 2009)

Christian Berger, head of the European Commission's office in East Jerusalem (ECTAO), accompanied by his assistants, described the situation in terms of the humanitarian emergency and political prospects.

He highlighted an interesting initiative: the appointment of a (Community) liaison agent between the Israeli Defence Minister and the EU representation, which would facilitate the support measures.

He mentioned the serious difficulties following the delays in the payment of contributions, particularly the payment of fixed costs such as wages.

There was an exchange of views on the various aspects concerning the Gaza blockade, which affected people, goods of all kinds, medicines and even the 'cash' needed to pay wages.

Christian Berger said that the topic of national reconciliation frequently came up but was surrounded by a great deal of tension.

According to Hervé Caiveau (ECHO), the situation was serious and required a great deal of energy:

- almost 90% of the population of Gaza was dependent on assistance, with 74% refugees/displaced persons;
- almost 1 400 people killed (including 435 children and 115 women) and 5 400 people injured on the Palestinian side, with 3 civilians and 11 soldiers killed on the Israeli side;
- as regards humanitarian aid: three quarters of the NGOs working on the ground experienced difficulties with access to Gaza, while only 15 products were authorised for entry (COGAT sources): thus, no paper, no glass, no cement, no cleaning products;
- during this time the Israeli authorities continued to take over new areas, expel people, demolish houses and move people out, etc.

The members of the Delegation asked about the EU funding: the decisions on what to rebuild, the conditions imposed on the various actors. These were questions that the European Parliament will raise with the Council and the Commission during future budget debates.

Ivo Silhavy, head of the mission of the Czech Republic, representing the Council Presidency, stressed that given the power of Hamas, the next Fatah national congress, which had been systematically postponed for years, would be extremely important.

He commended the government of the Palestinian Authority on the excellent administrative and budgetary measures it had taken.

As regards the national unity demands and its consequences, the presidency representative

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

was evasive; the Delegation unanimously believed, however, that mutual recognition of the governments elected at free and democratic elections on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides was inevitable.

Contact had already been established between the Palestinian Authority and the EU in relation to the monitoring of the future Palestinian elections.

The Swedish Ambassador summarised the recent visit by the Swedish Foreign Minister and Czech Prime Minister. He noted that there was a desire to hinder the economic development of Gaza and Palestine.

2 – Meetings with UNWRA

The 11 000 employees of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNWRA) does tremendous work on the ground, which is welcomed by all the observers, particularly during times of conflict.

UNWRA was responsible for protecting and transporting the Delegation during its visit to Gaza on 12 and 13 February. Its agents facilitated the organisation of the programme in liaison with the NGOs working in the area, thereby ensuring that the Delegation received the appropriate information and comments.

On 12 February the Delegation met with Karen Abu Zayd, UNWRA Commissioner-General. A broad exchange of views revealed the following information:

- The UN had launched an investigation to assess the events of the military operation carried out in the Gaza Strip (and the possibility of them being ‘war crimes’) at the initiative, and under the control of, the Human Rights Council and the Special Rapporteur;
- The UN had some appropriations in reserve;
- UNWRA’s field of action in Palestine covered education (221 schools), construction but also humanitarian and food aid;
- The latest operation targeted at Gaza and its infrastructure was similar to the one carried out in 2003.



The Delegation once again congratulated UNWRA and thanked it for its excellent contributions.

3 – Meetings with Palestinian bodies

Through its discussions with its various Palestinian contacts, the Delegation succeeded in gathering valuable information on the administrative, political, legal and economic situation.

a) Meeting with the Negotiations Support Unit (NSU) (Ramallah, 11 February 2009)

Mizma Shirabi, NSU communications director, met the Delegation at its offices in Ramallah for an information meeting that proved to be useful even for the attentive observers present. She pointed out that it was in 1999 that the Palestinian Authority had set up a professional advisory body to monitor all of the information and linguistic elements relating to the Palestinian issue around the world. These elements were clearly presented in a brochure published in spring 2008 entitled ‘An eye on Palestine’.

A fruitful discussion was held on the main topics:

- Palestine’s evolution: from 100% of the historical territory before 1948 to 44% with the 1947 partition, then 22% with the new borders drawn up in 1967, eventually resulting in 2007 in around 12% of the initial territory following the Israeli expansion;
- the methods of the Israeli ‘occupation’: the ‘Jewish’ colonies in Palestinian territory, via demolitions and expulsions; the war that encroached on up to approximately 8% of the ‘Green Line’; the 732 km of roads partially out of bounds to Palestinians; the restrictions on the free movement of people (permits restricted to specific times and areas), goods and capital;
- the status of Jerusalem and the Israeli policy of permit restrictions, expulsions and new settlements in the eastern region;
- the situation in Gaza;
- the questions concerning the Palestinian refugees;
- the situation of the Palestinian prisoners, in which the Delegation had taken an interest during its last visit in October 2008;
- the legal and political reactions: restitutions, compensation, legal proceedings.

b) Meeting with the Central Commission for Documentation and Pursuit of Israeli War Criminals (Gaza, 13 February 2009)

Two judges, the President and Secretary-General respectively, outlined the work of this Commission, which was set up following the Israeli military operation.

In order to assist the United Nations commission responsible for investigating the possibility of war crimes having been committed, the Commission’s staff was gathering the necessary evidence and keeping an official record of it.

One of the most serious operations had resulted in 22 victims from the Samouni family in the west of Gaza City: the Delegation would visit that area a few hours later.

c) Meeting with the business sector: the Private Sector Coordination Council (PSCC) (Gaza City, 13 February 2009)

Mohamed Yazegi, Chairman of the Coordination Council, accompanied by five company

heads, outlined the situation of the private sector in Gaza, which had 150 000 employees, including 3 000 engineers. The situation had deteriorated since the 2007 secession (9 400 lorries per month leaving Gaza before 2007 compared with 1 930 in June 2008) and the latest Israeli operation had aggravated it further.

Gaza's economy was totally dependent on Israel. Thus, in 2007 imports from Israel amounted to 3 billion shekels, whereas exports to Israel totalled only 500 million shekels.

Supplies of all kinds had stopped or become scarce, notably in the construction sector, which accounted for 85% of all work. The rare authorisations granted were for food and humanitarian aid.

The Israeli bombing had largely targeted, and very precisely, numerous production sites (as the Delegation saw for itself), thereby paralysing the economy and the supplies for the population. The damage was estimated at US\$ 200 million.

The company heads called for appropriate resources to enable them to play their role in restoring social and economic balance in the region.

They were also suffering from restrictions on their freedom of movement: only 200 special permits had been granted to them in response to 4 000 applications.

Finally, they regretted that they were not involved in the preparatory work of the delegation that the Palestinian Authority would send to the Cairo conference on 2 March.

The head of the European Parliament Delegation stated that he would convey that message to the authorities.

II – POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS

The Delegation met with the Prime Minister, elected representatives of the Palestinian Legislative Council and PLO representatives in Gaza.

1) Discussion with the Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad (Ramallah, 11 February 2009)

There was a very open exchange of views between the Prime Minister and the members of the Delegation, just a few days after President Abbas had spoken before the European Parliament in Strasbourg. The Prime Minister described the financial and logistical difficulties that had to be tackled in order to ensure a social balance, humanitarian support and reconstruction in Gaza. Over and above internal mechanisms, he counted on the support of the international bodies, the European Union and the NGOs.



On the issue of the necessary national unity, Salam Fayyad was clear and consistent with his previous statements. He admitted that there was a collective responsibility for the collapse of the last national unity government and, although his authority was not recognised by Hamas, he stated that he was prepared to agree to all parties being represented in a future government.

Dialogue must be sought by all means and without violence, both among the Palestinian political groups themselves and with Israel.

‘Peace can only be achieved between equals’, said the Prime Minister, quoting Mahmoud Darwish.

In his opinion, the European Union should be more consistent and send stronger signals to Israel to make it respect the commitments in the Association Agreement. The new US Administration should be able to take steps in the same direction.

The preparations for the elections (presidential and general) were following this approach.

2) Discussions with elected representatives of the Palestinian Legislative Council

Two meetings: in Ramallah and in Gaza.

a) Meeting with PLC representatives in Ramallah (11 February 2009)

A delegation of six elected representatives of the PLC, led by Mrs Hanan Ashrawi (Third Way), met with the Members of the European Parliament. Four political parties were represented: Fatah (including an elected representative from Gaza), Third Way, FPLP, PP.

Hanan Ashrawi began by describing the tragic situation following the Israeli military operation and underlined the responsibility of those in the West who refused to recognise the result of a democratic election.

In response to the very precise questions by Chris Davies and Frieda Brepoels on the path to national unity and the message for the European Union, the PLC representatives gave the following answers:

- Yes to a national agreement, regardless of its name (President Abbas would a few days later use the expression ‘government of national reconciliation’), which would pave the way for the next elections and subsequently the formation of a national unity government. The chances of success were dependent on the situation in Gaza, the attitude of the international community towards Hamas and the reactions in the wider region;
- All the Palestinian groups should agree on a series of points: programme, political strategy, nature of the opposition, mutual respect, etc.;
- Awareness of the difficulty of the task in relation to the demands of Hamas, which was in favour of returning to the PLO but wanted to assert its power there. However, Hamas should not be allowed to believe that it owned the Palestinian people. In a free state, Hamas ‘could not hold the majority’.
- The international community should weigh up the risks without ignoring the reality: Hamas’s advantage was that it represented the opposition, hence its reluctance to move closer to those who had ‘capitulated’. In a context of understanding and recognition, Hamas had great potential. It was up to all the actors, notably the international community, to assume their responsibilities. If not, the entire world would suffer.

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

b) Meeting with PLC representatives in Gaza (12 February 2009)

The Delegation met the 12 PLC representatives in Gaza (all from Hamas) in a tent erected in the courtyard. Their building had collapsed as a result of the Israeli bombs launched on the fifth day of the attack.

In the absence of the Vice-President of the PLC, Ahmed Bahar (for security reasons), the Palestinian delegation was led by Ismail Al Ashqar, assisted by Mustapha Al-Ghoul, the Justice Minister. It was under the portrait of their colleague, the Interior Minister in the *de*

facto government in Gaza, who was killed along with his family by the Israeli bombs, that Ismail Al Ashqar talked about the 'war crimes' and the 'holocaust' for which the Israelis were responsible.



In relation to national unity, the responses of the Hamas representatives became more and more precise: 'National union is an international creation, a false problem. Free the occupied West Bank, ensure that the international decisions are applied (by Israel), recognise in full the results of democratic procedures... and the situation will be completely different'.

At this delicate point in the discussion, nine of the PLC members stood up, at quite an untimely juncture, and left the tent, citing a busy schedule as their excuse. It was an unfortunate coincidence, as Chris Davies stressed in no uncertain terms. The exchange of views continued with the smaller group.

'A new national unity government will be based on the same principle of equality'. It was irrelevant whether the necessary transition authority consisted of independent technocrats or politicians from all the groups; the main thing was that it had to be accepted by all.

The conclusion was the same as in the previous meetings: 'When a Palestinian Government is elected through democratic elections (monitored by the international community), it must then be recognised, just as the government formed after the Israeli elections in the past was recognised'.

c) Meeting with PLO representatives in Gaza (12 February 2009)

Following a request from the EP Delegation to meet with it, the PLO in Gaza responded... with a delegation of 20 people, which did not on the face of it augur well for a clear and concise debate. Professor Riyad El Khoudary introduced his companions.

The PLO was the historical political structure of the Palestinians and its official representative on the international stage. Representing all the political groups, with the exception of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the PLO had expanded to incorporate other representatives of society, somewhat like the European economic and social committees. The 20 delegates that met with the Delegation in the Commodore Hotel in Gaza City thus represented Fatah, FPLP, PP, FLP, FAL, FAR... groups of varying political importance, but ones that had all played in a role in Palestine's history... not to mention the academics, journalists and civil servants also present.

The PLO representatives discussed their observations, their difficulties and their measured hopes:

- the certainty that Israel's action sought to divide the Palestinians and that Hamas was not directly targeted;
- there was no alternative to dialogue supported by the international community (US, EU, Arab States, etc.);
- Oslo was a mirage: those who had put most faith in it had lost the elections;
- 16 years of fruitless negotiations during which Israel continued to evolve as it hoped with disregard for the international agreements;
- but they had difficulties in coming up with objective and comprehensible reasons to oppose a real national unity (as Chris Davies remarked, on behalf of the European Parliament Delegation).

The final allusion to the divisions of all sorts (political, regional, within the Arab League, etc.) referred implicitly to Israel's dual responsibility, with its constant violation of the Palestinians' rights (and land), and to the international community as regards its passivity and its inability to recognise the political results of a democratic electoral procedure that it had so desired.

III - VISITS ON THE GROUND (GAZA, 12 AND 13 FEBRUARY 2009)

On the basis of a programme of visits prepared by UNWRA with the support of several NGOs, the Delegation was able to witness in the north of the Gaza Strip the extent of the damage caused by the Israeli operation to both people and belongings.

1) American International School in Gaza: a carefully targeted symbol



Sharhabeel Al Za'aem, a member of the school's board of directors, showed the MEPs what remained of the building, a symbol of US presence that had been flattened by bombing that had been too carefully targeted to be just an 'unfortunate error', as the Israeli forces had suggested. Luckily, there had been no victims. The rebuilding of the school, which was owned by a Palestinian investment fund, would have to wait until the necessary materials were available: cement was not allowed through.

2) Jabalia Food Distribution Centre: a question of survival

In the north of Gaza City men, women and children flock to one of the eight food distribution centres run by UNWRA and, after presenting their identity card, collect bags and cans that they load as quickly as possible onto carts that donkeys and horses will pull to their homes if they are still standing or to the tents that UNICEF has provisionally erected.

In this way, two to three months' worth of food are distributed among the 450 people (on average) who come to this distribution centre each day.

3) Izbet Abd Rabo village: a field of ruins

A village of around 250 houses completely razed to the ground by an aerial attack. The inhabitants fled and alerted UNWRA. It was on that occasion that one of the Agency's driver was killed.

Imad Okal, head of operations, described to the Delegation what life is like today in Izbet Abd Rabo, a vast building site where volunteers from various NGOs, including Palestinian NGOs, are working. The people affected spend their days there collecting debris and rebuilding and leave at nightfall to return to makeshift camps.



4) The industrial zone: deliberate economic destruction?

Yasser Wadia owned a factory that manufactured and packaged most of the dairy products, ice cream, biscuits and chocolate destined for the Gaza Strip as well as the West Bank. The Delegation saw at first hand the extent of the damage: infrastructure, equipment, machines, vehicles destroyed by the bombs and by the fires that broke out (or were lit) afterwards.

One of the 250 factories/production units that suffered as a result of the excessive precision of the Israeli aircraftmen.

5) Al Quds Hospital in Gaza City: a very unfortunate error

Al Quds is a hospital run by the Palestinian Red Crescent. It was hit during the Israeli military operation, just like 6 other hospitals, 35 clinics and 15 ambulances.

The visit organised by Khalid Joudeh of the local Red Crescent spoke for itself: the damage inflicted would require time and a great deal of money.

So many care facilities taken out of action.

Following the attack by an F16, the evacuation of 45 patients and 300 civilian refugees from the surrounding area required several days as the Israeli forces hindered communications and slowed down the access of aid, designating the zone as out of bounds.



In the midst of the rubble, children's paintings and drawings formed a very strange and morbid sight.

6) The tragedy of the Samouni family: serious 'collateral damage'



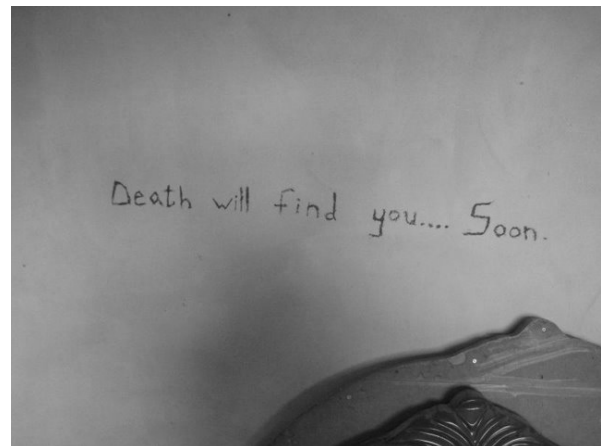
Almost 100 members of the Samouni family lived close to one another in Beit Lahia, a district in northern Gaza. On 5 January 2009 an Israeli plane released both bombs and paratroopers over the houses: panic, smoke. The inhabitants gathered together and then spread out among various houses. Their emergency calls went unheeded for three days, the zone having been secured. After three aerial attacks, the Samouni family had lost 22 of its members... 47 people were killed in the area.

In the middle of the ruins young Almazeh, aged 12, recounted the events with an impressive maturity.

7) The women of the Abouh Hadjaj family: hostages? But very real victims



The Israeli tanks headed for the Abouh Hadjaj house, not far from the industrial zone. The house had been hit hard, the people were coming out and making themselves known by waving white cloths. A few hours later, the mother and daughter were shot outside the door of their house.



Insults in English and in Hebrew cover the walls....

8) The choice of white phosphorus: the limits of international conventions



Another district in northern Gaza, a target of the Israeli military operation, Al Atatra, where the Delegation passed by images of houses smashed or flattened by the tanks, while the ground turned upside down by the bulldozers looked like lunar landscapes.

One of the houses that was destroyed and the account of the inhabitants, who described 'flames that burned long after impact', a side-effect characteristic of what the experts call white phosphorus.

The product is well known: used by the Americans during the Second World War and even in Iraq, it is included in the list of prohibited products of Protocol III to the 1980 Convention... but Israel has not ratified it, nor has the United States.

The Delegation observed, asked questions, listened... conscious that all the war scenes, whatever they were, had the same unbearable characteristics.

It was conscious that the only assessment of the consequences of the military operation could be an implacable one.

However, the fact remains that the observations and the accounts were unilateral.

When the UN sets up a committee of inquiry to determine whether or not certain acts of the military operation should be designated 'war crimes', perhaps the European Parliament could think about how to obtain additional information about the origins and details of the conflict.

For example, a broader composition of the delegation would help: in this case, members of both the Israel and Palestine delegations. However, it would also be appropriate to ensure a more comprehensive programme comprising a section in the opposite territory and complementary meetings in order to provide at least some counter-arguments.





CONCLUSION

Following its visit to the West Bank and Gaza, the Delegation reached the following conclusions:

- It should be noted that the following conclusions are set out in greater detail in a resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 18 February 2009, which the members of the Delegation helped to prepare.

The Delegation:

- calls for the immediate reopening of all the crossing points from/to Gaza for both people and goods;
- calls for increased humanitarian aid with the cooperation of the United Nations agencies and the international community;
- appalled by the heavy death toll and scenes of destruction it witnessed, supports the initiatives for enquiries into possible 'war crimes';
- is outraged by the deliberate destruction of the Gaza economy and calls for an active reflection on ways of facilitating the reconstruction;
- notes the desire expressed by the Palestinian political authorities it met to work towards a government of national unity, with which the European Union should cooperate;
- hopes that the European Union and the international community will act in a more balanced and consistent manner with regard to both parties, Palestinians and Israelis, avoiding any ambiguous language that could prejudice the necessary Palestinian reconciliation;
- once again invites the European Parliament to reflect upon the arrangements governing its relations with the two key players in the region, as regards both the interparliamentary approach and the 'evidence' missions.

Kyriacos Triantaphyllides



PRESS RELATIONS

As usual in the region, wide press coverage, particularly televised press.

- two formal press conferences: (Gaza, 12 February 2009)
- at the PLC premises, joint press conference by Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Chairman of the EP Delegation, and Mr Al-Ghoul, a member of the PLC and Minister of Justice
- at the Ramattan press centre, press conference by the EP Delegation
- televised and written press in Ramallah during the meeting with the PLC
- live interviews (Al Jazeera TV and others) with the chairman and members of the Delegation
- followed in Gaza by a local TV channel chosen by the European Parliament
- an ITV team following in particular (in Gaza) Jill Evans, a member of the Delegation
- two press releases, disseminated by the EP's DG INFO (one interim and one final)

- 2 press releases:



Press release

A working group of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council visited Ramallah and Gaza from 11-13 February 2009. The delegation was led by Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE-CY) with Proinsias de Rossa (PES-IE), Frieda Brepoels (EPP/ED-BE), Chris Davies (ALDE-UK) Jill Evans (V/EFA-UK), and Luisa Morgantini (GUE- IT).

The Delegation:

- Is shocked and dismayed at the scenes of wanton destruction witnessed in Gaza on Thursday 12 and Friday 13 February, and calls on the immediate full-time opening of all crossings for people and for all necessary goods in order to alleviate the on-going and continuing suffering of the Gazan civilian population and the reconstruction of infrastructure, whereas UNRWA informed us that food and medicines are not yet sufficient to meet the needs of the population;
- Considers it necessary to support the initiatives for enquiries into possible war-crimes committed by the IDF;
- Witnessed the deliberate targeting and destruction by troops on the ground and air forces of Gazan infrastructure - industrial zones, schools, and, indeed, a hospital and civilian homes;
- Is appalled by the heavy death toll of the civilian population, particularly women and children.
- During its meetings with representatives from all the political and elected authorities, the Delegation was made aware of the common desire of all factions to create a 'National Unity Government', and urges the European Council to cooperate with a national unity government and to work together with the other members of the Quartet to find a lasting and durable solution.

Kyriacos Triantaphyllides
Chairman of DPLC

Press release 16 February 2009 - EP press service

EP Delegation to Gaza expresses its shock and dismay after witnessing scenes of destruction.

MEPs of the Delegation say they are: 'shocked and dismayed at the scenes of wanton destruction witnessed in Gaza' on Thursday, 12 and Friday, 13 February. A working group of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council, led by Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (GUE, CY), visited Ramallah and Gaza from 11-13 February 2009.

The Delegation calls for the immediate opening of all crossings for people and humanitarian aid in order to alleviate the on-going and continuing suffering of the civilian population in Gaza and to allow the reconstruction of infrastructure. UNRWA informed MEPs that food and medicines are not yet sufficient to meet the needs of the population.

MEPs expressed support for the calls made for an inquiry into possible war-crimes committed by the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF). The Delegation witnessed scenes of the deliberate targeting and destruction by troops on the ground and air forces of Gazan infrastructure - industrial zones, schools, and, indeed, a hospital and civilian homes.

The Delegation is appalled by the heavy death toll of the civilian population, particularly women and children.

A future National Unity Government?

During the meetings held with representatives from all the political and elected authorities, the Delegation was made aware of the common desire of all factions to create a 'National Unity Government'. MEPs ask the European Council to cooperate with a future national unity government. They also ask it to work together with the other members of the Quartet to find a lasting and durable solution.

Other members of the delegation: Proinsias de Rossa (PES, IE), Frieda Brepoels (EPP-ED, BE), Chris Davies (ALDE, UK), Jill Evans (Greens/EFA, UK) and Luisa Morgantini (GUE/NGL, IT).

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009



ЕВРОПЕЙСКИ ПАРЛАМЕНТ PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EVROPSKÝ PARLAMENT EUROPA-PARLAMENTET
EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT EUROOPA PARLAMENT ΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΒΟΥΛΙΟ EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
PARLEMENT EUROPÉEN PARLAIMINT NA HEORPA PARLAMENTO EUROPEO EIROPAS PARLAMENTS
EUROPOS PARLAMENTAS EURÓPAI PARLAMENT IL-PARLAMENT EWROPEW EUROPEES PARLEMENT
PARLAMENT EUROPEJSKI PARLAMENTO EUROPEU PARLAMENTUL EUROPEAN
EURÓPSKY PARLAMENT EVROPSKI PARLAMENT EUROOPAN PARLAMENTTI EUROPAPARLAMENTET

Delegation for Relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council

FINAL PROGRAMME



Extra-ordinary visit to Palestine

10 - 13 February 2009

Ramallah / Jerusalem / Gaza

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

10 February in Bethlehem

**Individual arrival of participants
(Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv) and transfer to:**

Hotel

Intercontinental - JACIR PALACE

JERUSALEM-HEBRON ROAD • BETHLEHEM, 00000
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY
Front Desk: +972-2-2766777 • Fax: +972-2-2766770

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

11 February in Ramallah/Jerusalem

- 08:45** **Departure from Hotel to Ramallah**
- 09:50** **Arrival in Ramallah through 'Qalandia'**
- 10:00** **Meeting with Negotiations Support Unit (NSU)**
- 12:00** **Meeting with Mr. Salam Fayyad, Prime Minister.**
Accompanied by Christian Berger - Head of Delegation ECTAO
- 13:00** **Working lunch with members of the PLC from all blocs and lists**
Lunch hosted by the chairman - Kyriacos Triantaphyllides
- 15:00** **Departure for ECTAO - Jerusalem**
- 16:00-17:00** **Briefing by ECTAO/ECHO**
- 17:00-18:30** **Meeting with Troika (CZ PRES, EC, SE)**
- 18:30** **Departure to Hotel Jacir/Bethlehem**
- 19:30** **Reception hosted by ECTAO**
Head of Delegation Christian BERGER
Hotel Jacir Palace

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

12 February in Gaza

- 06:30** **Departure for Gaza**
- 10:00** **Enter Gaza**
- 10:15-10:45** **Visit the American School**
- Briefing by Sharhabeel Al Za'aem, Board of Directors
- 11:00-11:15** **Visit UNRWA Jabalia Food Distribution Centre**
- Briefing on Food Distribution to nearly 1 million refugees
- 11:30-12:15** **Visit Izbet Abd Rabo and Industrial Area**
- Briefing by Imad Okal, UNRWA Area Operations Officer
- Briefing by Dr Yasser Wadia, owner of ice cream and biscuit factory
- 12:45-13:15** **Visit Palestinian Red Crescent Society Hospital**
- Briefing by Khalid Joudeh, PRCS
- 14:00-16:00** **Meeting with PLC Members**
- 16:15-17:00** **Press Conference at Ramattan Studios**
- 17:30-18:30** **Meeting with Palestinian Businessmen's Association**
- 18:30-19:30** **Meeting with UNRWA Commissioner-General Karen ABU ZAYD**
- 19:30** **Check into hotel**

Hotel COMMODORE

Gaza - Palestine - Rasheed St. - Sea Side
Tel.: +972 8 2834400/10/20/30 - Fax: +972 8 2822623
[Http://www.commodore.ps](http://www.commodore.ps)

- 20:00-22:00** **Meeting with PLO**
Place Hotel Commodore

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

13 February in Gaza

- 08:00** **Pick up from Commodore Hotel**
- 08:15-09:00** **Visiting TAWTHEQ**
The Central Commission for documentation and pursuit of Israeli war Criminals
- 09:15-10:15** **Field visit to Johr el Deek with human rights organisations**
- 10:30-11:30** **Field visit to Samouni family household with human rights organisations**
- 11:30** **Depart for Erez, visiting Al-Tetra residential area and stopping Beit Lahia Waste Water Treatment Plant.**
- 14:30** **Departure to Bethlehem - Hotel Jacir Palace**
- 17:00-19:00** **Delegation meeting**
- Free evening**

14 February in Bethlehem

Departure

Extraordinary visit, 11-13 February 2009

List of Participants

Surname		Name	Political group	Country
Mr	Kyriacos	TRIANTAPHYLLIDES, Chairman of the Delegation	GUE/NGL	Cyprus
Mr	Proinsias	DE ROSSA, Vice-Chair of the Delegation	PSE	Ireland
Mrs	Luisa	MORGANTINI	GUE/NGL	Italy
Mrs	Frederika	BREPOELS	EPP-ED	Belgium
Mrs	Jill	EVANS	Verts/ALE	United Kingdom
Mr	Chris	DAVIES	ALDE	United Kingdom

ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR POLITICAL GROUPS

EPP-ED	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats
PSE	Socialist Group in the European Parliament
ALDE	Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Verts/ALE	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
GUE/NGL	Confederal Group of the European United Left – Nordic Green Left

Secretariat Interparliamentary Delegations

Mr	Christian	GARRIGUES	Chief Administrator and Head of the Secretariat
Mrs	Morag	DONALDSON	Administrator
Mr	Lars	NIELSEN	Assistant

Political Group Advisors:

Mr	Niccolo	RINALDI	ALDE
Mr	Paolo	BERGAMASCHI	Verts/ALE

Interpreters:

Mrs	Vera	NOFAL	Ramallah
Mr	Said Aref Said	SHAATH	Gaza