



Israeli-Palestinian peace process: two 'democratic and pluralist' states for two peoples

Strasbourg, 06.06.2013 – On the basis of a report by Pietro Marcenaro (Italy, SOC) on the situation in the Middle East, the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), meeting in Paris today, reiterated its support for a solution establishing “two states for two peoples”, while emphasising the need to qualify this expression by specifying “two democratic and pluralist states”.

This means that, in parallel to status issues, those of standards should also be addressed so that, ultimately, whether in territories under Israeli or Palestinian control, all people, Arabs and Jews, Israeli and Palestinian citizens, will enjoy respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

“Conflicts poison a democracy. These two peoples are ‘condemned’ to live together. So let us discuss the conditions for living together rather than the conditions for living separately. That is probably the cornerstone of my report”, stressed Mr Marcenaro.

In a unanimously adopted draft resolution the committee calls on the Israeli authorities to guarantee the same individual rights to all Israeli citizens, including members of the Arab minority, and to recognise minority rights to the latter. It also calls for the release of imprisoned members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, a halt to the building of new settlements and the extension of existing ones, and a halt to construction of the separation wall.

The committee calls on all Palestinian forces to conclude the reconciliation process between Fatah and Hamas, to hold presidential and parliamentary elections and to end arbitrary detentions.

Members voiced particular concern over human rights violations in the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and urged Hamas to bring to justice those responsible for executions following unfair trials and to put a moratorium on executions pending abolition of the death penalty. Lastly, the committee urged Hamas to recognise the right of the state of Israel to exist, endorse the Arab peace plan and stop all types of attack against Israel.

The report will be debated during the next PACE plenary Session, possibly on the morning of Tuesday 25 June.