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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Brian Crowley, Cristiana Muscardini, Roberta Angelilli, Inese Vaidere,
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on behalf of the UEN Group

on Palestine

European Parliament resolution on Palestine

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Middle East, in particular that of 7 September 2006 on the situation in the Middle East,
 - having regard to its resolution of 25 April 2007 on the case of the BBC journalist Alan Johnston,
 - having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions 1757 (2007), 1748(2007), 1747(2007), 1701(2006), 1559(2004), 520(1982), 426(1978), 338(1973) and 242(1967),
 - having regard to the address of the President of the European Parliament to the Israeli Knesset on 30 May 2007
 - having regard to the Neighbourhood Agreements between the EU and Israel and the EU and Palestine,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the 19th Arab League Summit in Riyadh from 29 March 2007,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the escalating conflict between Israel and Palestine continues to have a negative impact on the situation in the whole of the Middle East,
- B. whereas BBC journalist Alan Johnston, who was abducted on 12 March 2007 in Gaza, has been released by Hamas,
- C. whereas the European Union has a special responsibility for peace and security in the Middle East,
- D. whereas in July 2006 Hamas kidnapped an Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit, whose fate still remains uncertain and whose release has been repeatedly called for by numerous organisations and institutions, such as the UN Security Council, the EU and the EMPA;
- E. whereas the Hamas-led Palestinian Government has so far failed to meet the Quartet (EU, UN, United States, Russia) criteria, relating to the recognition of Israel, repudiation of violence and acceptance of international agreements,
- F. whereas the EU ban on Hamas as a terrorist organisation made it impossible to directly fund the Palestinian Authority and forced the EU to send money through a special Temporary International Mechanism (TIM),
- G. whereas the Hamas rocket attacks on Israel in April 2007 led to the breaking of the five-

month ceasefire between the Palestinians and Israelis and reopened the vicious circle of attacks on Israeli settlements and retaliation strikes by the Israeli army and air forces,

- H. whereas Hamas is constantly engaged in smuggling arms and ammunition into the Gaza Strip in order to maintain the struggle within Palestinian society,
 - I. whereas the Speaker and 40 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council have been arrested by Israel and are still being held captive,
 - J. whereas the situation of the Christian minorities in the Middle East is endangered by the current wave of violence,
1. Expresses its deep concern over the escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict reflected in the recent events in Gaza and the West Bank, and calls on the international community to redouble its efforts for peace in the region in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions;
 2. Welcomes the Quartet's statement released after the conference held on 15 June and its support for efforts to address the humanitarian needs of and mobilise international assistance to the Palestinians;
 3. Welcomes the recent appointment of former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair as UN Special Envoy to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
 4. Welcomes the Commission's allocation of EUR 43 million in humanitarian aid for vulnerable Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and other countries in the region;
 5. Urges the Israeli authorities to permit a humanitarian access to Gaza and stresses the need for rapid action to prevent the humanitarian position from deteriorating any further and avoid further suffering of the civilian population who are the most affected victims of the violence;
 6. Welcomes the revival of a 'Beirut Plan' of 2002 at the Arab League summit in Riyadh in 2007 and notes it as a clear signal sent by the Arab world of its desire to bring the Israeli-Palestinian dispute to a peaceful end;
 7. Reaffirms its commitment to granting effective humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people; stresses, nevertheless, that the aid must not directly or indirectly support any violent groups or any policy affirming violence which aims at destroying the State of Israel;
 8. Welcomes the release of BBC journalist Alan Johnston and calls on the Palestinian authorities to take all necessary steps to avoid future abductions of journalists, humanitarian aid workers and other foreign personnel working on its territories, and to ensure that those responsible for kidnappings are brought to justice;
 9. Calls on the Hamas movement to recognise the State of Israel and the previous international peace agreements with Israel, and to renounce violence against it;
 10. Regrets that all the efforts made by Arab mediation in suspending the factional warfare and the establishment of the Government of National Unity are being clearly undermined

by the new and bloody escalation of violence which has so far caused the deaths of 50 people and injuries to many others;

11. Is particularly concerned about the possible political development of this violent turmoil in the Territories, which has been mainly determined by the attitude of Hamas not to accept any compromise and the efforts of the Government of National Unity to have a dialogue with Israel; urges Hamas, therefore, to refrain from the use of violence and start talks for an immediate ceasefire which could be the first step towards a return to peace and legality in the Territories;
12. Notes the recent and bold decision taken by Palestinian Authority's President, Mahmoud Abbas, to appoint immediately after the ceasefire the new emergency Cabinet led by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad; hopes that such a government can reopen the dialogue with Israel, stop the violence in Gaza and relaunch the difficult peace process;
13. Notes the efforts of the European Union Border Assistance Mission at the new Rafah Crossing Point on the Gaza-Egypt Border (EU BAM) to monitor and evaluate the performance of the PA border control; welcomes the Council's adoption of a joint action extending the mandate of the Mission until 24 May 2008;
14. Calls on Israel to release the members of the Palestinian Legislative Council;
15. Welcomes the election of Shimon Peres to the Israeli Presidency; considers that given his high political profile and experience in Middle East affairs Shimon Peres can continue in his new post to play an important role in relaunching the peace process;
16. Welcomes the success of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and notes that such a mission could be taken as an exemplary model to be followed in the negotiation process for a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Secretary-General, the President of the UN General Assembly, the Governments and Parliaments of Israel, Lebanon, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Iran, the USA and Russia, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.