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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 Francis Wurtz, Luisa Morgantini, Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Miguel Portas
and Felekna Uca

on the situation in the Middle East/Gaza Strip

European Parliament resolution on the situation in the Middle East/Gaza Strip

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Middle East, in particular those of 16 November 2006 on the situation in the Gaza Strip, 12 July 2007 on the Middle East, 11 October 2007 on the humanitarian situation in Gaza and 21 February 2008 on the situation in the Gaza Strip,
 - having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1860 of 8 January 2009,
 - having regard the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949),
 - having regard to the statement by the European Union on the situation in the Middle East of 30 December 2008,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 27 December 2008 Israel launched a military offensive in Gaza, the most significant Israeli military action since the Six Day War in 1967,
- B. whereas according to the latest reports the Israeli operation has so far killed nearly 1000 people in Gaza, many of them children and women, caused thousands of casualties and resulted in the destruction of houses, schools and other key items of civilian infrastructure, as witnessed also by some Members of this House during their recent visit to Rafah,
- C. whereas many reports claim that the Israeli Army is using phosphorus munitions, causing more serious injuries,
- D. whereas the border crossings in and out of Gaza have been closed for 18 months and the blockade preventing the movement of people and goods has affected the daily lives of the inhabitants and further paralysed the economy in the Gaza Strip, and whereas the policy of isolating the Gaza Strip has failed both in political and humanitarian terms,
- E. whereas the Israeli war and the blockade of the Gaza Strip represent collective punishment in contravention of international humanitarian law, and whereas the UN Human Rights Council's special rapporteur on the situation of Palestinian human rights in the West Bank and Gaza has stated that the blockade of Gaza amounts to a crime against humanity,
- F. whereas the European Union's considerable financial support to the Palestinians has played an important role in the efforts to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank, but has failed to make any contribution to the political process; whereas the latest development is also a result of a policy pursued by the EU and other international actors, who for decades have granted Israel impunity for continued and permanent violations of international and international humanitarian law,

1. Firmly condemns the massive offensives by the Israeli air and ground forces in a densely populated area, a war which is claiming an increasingly high number of victims among the civilian population and causing the widespread destruction of civilian infrastructures;
2. Expresses its sympathy for the civilian population affected by the violence in Gaza; deeply deplores the fact that civilian and UN targets have also been hit;
3. Calls for an immediate, lasting and fully respected ceasefire leading to the complete withdrawal of all Israeli occupation forces from Gaza and for a negotiated truce that should be guaranteed by a mechanism to be set up by the international community, including a multinational protection force;
4. Welcomes the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1860 of 8 January 2009;
5. Invites the Council and the EU Member States to exert pressure with a view to implementing the UN Security Council resolution and halting the ongoing violence; urges Member States to stop supplying weapons to Israel;
6. Condemns the Hamas rocket attacks on Israeli civilians; expresses its sympathy for the Israeli civilian population affected by the violence; calls on Hamas to end the rocket attacks and to shoulder its own responsibilities by committing itself to a political process;
7. Stresses the vital importance of renewing the efforts to bring about inter-Palestinian reconciliation and underlines, in this respect, the need for a permanent geographical connection between, and the peaceful and lasting political reunification of, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank;
8. Reiterates its view that there cannot be a military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; welcomes, therefore, all the diplomatic action taken; calls on the Council to make every effort to revitalise the Quartet and to facilitate the negotiations between all the parties concerned;
9. Points out that the Israeli military action has irreversibly shattered the Annapolis process and is jeopardising all the limited achievements and the remaining hopes of a comprehensive, negotiated settlement of the conflict in the medium term;
10. Underlines that a genuine solution to the current crisis can only be found through honest negotiations, the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since 1967 and a final, just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which can only be the two-state solution - the establishment of a Palestinian State on the basis of the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and a comprehensive settlement for all the Palestinian refugees on the basis of UN General Assembly Resolution 194;
11. Expresses its deep concern at the fate and the safety of the 1.5 million Palestinians trapped in Gaza with no possibility to leave the Strip; takes the view that a daily three-hour cessation of bombing remains insufficient to deal with the present humanitarian

catastrophe, which can only be tackled by means of an immediate and lasting ceasefire; points out that the present crisis is exacerbating the situation created by the blockade of the Gaza Strip imposed by the Israeli authorities since 2007;

12. Calls on the Israeli authorities to allow food, urgent medical aid and fuel to be delivered to the Gaza Strip, by opening the crossing points and lifting the blockade; urges, in particular, the Egyptian authorities to do their utmost to open the Rafah border crossing and so enable refugees and the civilian population to leave and humanitarian aid to be supplied;
13. Considers that the immediate renewed implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access (AMA) and of the Agreed Principles for Rafah Crossing (APRC), concluded in September 2005 by Israel and the Palestinian Authority after unilateral disengagement by Israel from the Gaza Strip, must be guaranteed without restriction and calls on the Council to resume the EU Monitoring Mission at Rafah;
14. Strongly criticises the decision by the Israeli authorities not to allow journalists into the Gaza Strip and to authorise only a limited number of humanitarian convoys; calls for international monitors to be granted unhindered and unfettered access in order to allow for an investigation of the crimes committed before and during the military offensive;
15. Underlines that the policy pursued by the EU and other international actors of granting Israel impunity for violations of international and international humanitarian law has failed; calls on the Council, the Member States and the Commission finally to draw conclusions from this fact;
16. Considers that the Israeli attacks on Gaza run counter to the provisions of the EU-Israel Association Agreement, notably those relating to the human rights clause, which is regarded in legal terms as an essential element of the agreement; takes the view that in the light of recent developments, and in accordance with its Article 2, the EU-Israel Association Agreement should be suspended;
17. Reaffirms that the development of EU-Israel relations must be strongly conditional on respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, on the ending of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, on genuine commitment to a comprehensive peace settlement and on the full implementation of the EC-PLO Interim Association Agreement; calls on the Council and Commission immediately to halt the process of upgrading EU-Israel relations;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Secretary-General, the Quartet Envoy to the Middle East, the President of the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Israeli Government, the Knesset and the Egyptian Government and Parliament.