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10.12.2012

B7-0571/2012

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the Israeli Government's decision to expand settlements in the West Bank (2012/2911(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

**B7-0571/2012**

**European Parliament resolution on the Israeli Government's decision to expand settlements in the West Bank (2012/2911(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular those of 22 November 2012 on the situation in Gaza<sup>1</sup>, of 5 July 2012 on EU Policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem<sup>2</sup>, and of 16 February 2012 on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of the regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to the decision of the United Nations General Assembly of 29 November 2012 to grant Palestine non-member observer state status,
  - having regard to the Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process of 10 December 2012 and of 14 May 2012,
  - having regard to the statement of 2 December 2012 by the EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on reports indicating the Israeli Government's intention to expand settlements,
  - having regard to the Charter of the United Nations,
  - having regard to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949,
  - having regard to EU-Israel contractual relations, in particular the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the State of Israel, of the other part,
  - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the United Nations General Assembly decided on 29 November 2012 by an overwhelming majority, with 138 votes in favour, 9 against, and 41 abstentions, to grant Palestine non-member observer state status in the UN;
- B. whereas this decision of the UN General Assembly should give new impetus to peace efforts aimed at achieving the two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as capital of both states, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security;
- C. whereas several Israeli politicians and intellectuals expressed their support for the

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0454.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0298.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0060.

Palestinian bid, while Israel's representative voted against it at the UN General Assembly; whereas a rally held by political parties and civil society organisations took place on 29 November 2012 in Tel Aviv in support of the two-state solution and the Palestinian bid;

- D. whereas the Israeli Government announced on 2 December 2012 the building of 3 000 new settlement units in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; whereas, if implemented, the announced plans would undermine the viability of the two-state solution, with special regard to the E1 area, where settlement constructions would divide the West Bank in two, rendering impossible the creation of a viable, contiguous and sovereign Palestinian State, endorsed by the UN General Assembly; whereas about 2 300 Palestinian Bedouins residing in the hills to the east of Jerusalem, many of whom are refugees, women and children, face a high risk of forced displacement;
- E. whereas on 2 December 2012 the Israeli Government announced the withholding of USD 100 million in Palestinian tax revenues; whereas monthly tax transfers are a crucial element in the Palestinian Authority's budget; whereas Israeli Finance Minister Yuval Steinitz said that tax revenues were withheld to pay off Palestinian debts to the Israeli Electric Corporation;
- F. whereas Israeli settlements are illegal under international law and constitute a major obstacle to peace efforts while they are subsidised by the Israeli Government in the fields of taxation, housing, infrastructure, roads, access to water, education, health care etc.; whereas, in its judgment of 25 February 2010, the Court of Justice of the European Union took the view that products obtained in locations which had been placed under Israeli administration since 1967 did not qualify for the preferential treatment provided for under the EU-Israel Association Agreement and that the Israeli authorities were obliged to provide sufficient information under this agreement to enable the real origin of products to be determined;
- G. whereas, in the absence of an effective EU control mechanism, Israeli settlement products continue to arrive on the European market under preferential treatment; whereas, in its resolution of 5 July 2012, the European Parliament called for 'full and effective implementation of existing EU legislation and EU-Israel bilateral agreements to ensure that the EU control mechanism – the "technical arrangements" – does not allow Israeli settlement products to be imported to the European market under the preferential terms of the EU-Israel Association Agreement';
- H. whereas, in its resolution of 5 July 2012, the European Parliament strongly condemned all acts of settler extremism, violence and harassment against Palestinian civilians and called on the Israeli Government and authorities to bring the perpetrators of such acts to justice and to hold them accountable, as the lack of accountability creates impunity;
- I. whereas, as a result of the ongoing expansion of settlements, the Palestinian population in the West Bank and East Jerusalem continue to suffer from planning restrictions, house demolitions, evictions and displacements, confiscation of land, difficult access to natural resources etc., which have a significant negative effect on their living conditions;
- J. whereas the European Union is the largest donor to the Palestinian Authority; whereas the

humanitarian and development aid provided by the international community, and the EU and its Member States in particular, to Palestinians does not relieve Israel as the occupying power of its obligations under international law; whereas many projects funded by the European Union in the occupied Palestinian territory, including solar panels, water tanks and agricultural buildings, have been destroyed by Israeli forces and many EU-funded projects continue to be under threat of demolition;

1. Welcomes the decision of the United Nations General Assembly of 29 November 2012 to grant Palestine non-member observer state status in the UN, which should give a new impetus to peace efforts between Israelis and Palestinians;
2. Expresses its deepest concern about the announcement made by the Israeli Government in the aftermath of the UN decision regarding the construction of 3 000 new settlement units in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; calls on the Israeli Government not to implement this decision and to put an immediate end to all settlement constructions and extensions in the occupied Palestinian territory and to dismantle all outposts erected since March 2011;
3. Condemns the decision by the Israeli Government to withhold USD 100 million in Palestinian tax revenues, which undermines the Palestinian Authority's budget, and calls for the immediate transfer of these revenues;
4. Notes the fact that Israeli politicians and civil society organisations expressed support for the Palestinian bid in the UN, which reflects a diversity of views in Israeli society regarding the conflict and the current Israeli Government's policies that go against the spirit of peace and undermine the prospect of the two-state solution; reiterates, at the same time, its strong commitment to the security of the State of Israel;
5. Calls again for full and effective implementation of existing EU legislation and EU-Israel bilateral agreements by the EU and its Member States in order to ensure that the EU control mechanism – the 'technical arrangements' – does not allow Israeli settlement products to be imported onto the European market under the preferential terms of the EU-Israel Association Agreement or under the EU's agreements with other pan-Euro-Mediterranean trading partners;
6. Calls for concrete, effective EU action in EU-Israel bilateral relations in order to put an end to settlers' violence against Palestinian civilians and to ensure that perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice and held accountable;
7. Reiterates its strong support for the two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as capital of both States, with the State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security; stresses again that peaceful and non-violent means are the only way to achieve a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and calls in this context for the resumption of direct peace talks between the two parties; calls on all parties to refrain from any unilateral action which could undermine or hinder peace efforts and the prospects for a negotiated peace agreement;
8. Continues to call, in the same spirit, for Palestinian reconciliation, which is the way to reunite Palestinians living in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, who are

part of the same Palestinian people;

9. Calls on the Council and the Commission to continue to address the issues of settlements, settlement products and settler violence at all levels in the EU's bilateral relations with Israel; stresses that the Israeli Government's commitment to honour its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law vis-à-vis the Palestinian population, including Bedouins living in areas affected by Israeli settlement constructions, must be taken into full consideration in the EU's bilateral relations with the country;
10. Urges the EU and the Member States once again to play a more active political role in the efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians; supports the High Representative in her efforts to create a credible prospect of relaunching the peace process;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative to the Middle East Peace Process, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Quartet Envoy to the Middle East, the Knesset and the Government of Israel, the President of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council.