Subject: Palestine - resignation of the UN Special Rapporteur

A year after taking up his duties, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories has tendered his resignation. The Special Rapporteur said that he had resigned because Israel had never allowed him to visit Palestine. When he announced his decision, he sharply criticised the approach and practice of the Israeli authorities, complaining that 'my efforts to help improve the lives of Palestinian victims of violations under the Israeli occupation have been frustrated every step of the way'.

The previous Special Rapporteur also claimed that Israel had never let him enter the Palestinian territories. Israel's attitude of boycotting and obstructing the work of the UN is an affront to international law and the rights of the Palestinian people.

1. How does the Commission view these events?

2. Given the Israeli Government's repeated assaults on the Palestinian people's basic rights, how does the Commission think that EU-Israel relations might be affected, especially where bilateral agreements are concerned?