



TEXTS ADOPTED

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Achieving the two-state solution in the Middle East

European Parliament resolution of 18 May 2017 on achieving the two-state solution in the Middle East (2016/2998(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Middle East Peace Process,
 - having regard to previous UN resolutions,
 - having regard to the UN human rights conventions to which Israel and Palestine are States Parties,
 - having regard to the report of 1 July 2016 and the statement of 23 September 2016 by the Middle East Quartet,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process, in particular those of 18 January 2016 and 20 June 2016,
 - having regard to 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 123(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas achieving peace in the Middle East remains a key priority for the international community and an indispensable element for regional and global stability and security;
- B. whereas the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the ‘High Representative’) has on several occasions expressed her commitment to renewing and intensifying the Union’s role in the peace process; whereas in April 2015 the High Representative appointed a new EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process (the ‘EU Special Representative’); whereas the Special Representative has yet to deliver;
- C. whereas the Quartet and regional partners such as Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, have an important role, in seeking the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict;
- D. whereas continuing violence, terrorist attacks against civilians, and incitement to violence are greatly exacerbating mistrust and are fundamentally incompatible with a

peaceful resolution;

E. whereas the UN Security Council, in its resolution 2334 (2016):

(a) reaffirmed that the establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation of international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of the two-state solution;

(b) called upon the parties to distinguish, in their relevant dealings, between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967;

(c) recalled the obligation under the Quartet roadmap for the Palestinian Authority Security Forces to maintain effective operations aimed at confronting all those engaged in terror and dismantling terrorist capabilities, including the confiscation of illegal weapons;

F. whereas according to the Office of the EU Representative in Palestine, there was a high rate of demolitions of Palestinian structures during the past months;

G. whereas there are numerous reports of human right violations in the Gaza Strip;

H. whereas there is concern regarding the situation of prisoners on both sides, especially as regards the ongoing hunger strike of Palestinian prisoners; whereas both parties should live up to international obligations in respecting prisoners' rights;

I. whereas all parties should support dialogue and practical collaboration, particularly in the areas of security, access to water, sanitation and energy resources, and in promoting growth in the Palestinian economy, thereby offering a vision of hope, peace and reconciliation which the region so greatly needs;

J. whereas relations between the EU and both sides should be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of these relations;

1. Reiterates its strong support for the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states, with the secure State of Israel and an independent, democratic, contiguous and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security, on the basis of the right of self-determination and full respect for international law;

2. Underlines the importance of the parties resuming substantive negotiations as soon as possible with a view to reaching a just, lasting and comprehensive peace; calls on both parties to avoid steps which could spark further escalation, including unilateral measures which could prejudice the outcome of negotiations, threaten the viability of the two-state solution and generate further mistrust; calls on both parties to restate their commitment to the two-state solution, thus disassociating themselves from voices that reject this solution;

3. Strongly opposes all actions that undermine the viability of the two-state solution and urges both sides to demonstrate, through policies and actions, a genuine commitment to a two-state solution in order to rebuild trust; welcomes the commitment expressed

during the recent visit of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to the United States to work together for peace;

4. Stresses that protecting and preserving the viability of the two-state solution must be the immediate priority in European Union policies and action with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the Middle East peace process;
5. Condemns all acts of violence, acts of terrorism against Israelis, and incitement to violence which are fundamentally incompatible with advancing a peaceful two-state solution; notes that all parties should act effectively against violence, terrorism, hate speech and incitement, as this is critical to rebuilding confidence and to avoiding escalation that will further undermine the prospects for peace;
6. Stresses, recalling that settlements are illegal under international law, that the recent decisions to establish a new settlement deep inside the West Bank, to issue tenders for almost 2 000 settlement units and to declare further land deep inside the West Bank as 'state land' further undermine prospects for a viable two-state solution; condemns the continuation of, and calls on the Israeli authorities to immediately halt and reverse, the settlement policy; regrets, in particular, the approval by the Knesset on 6 February 2017 of the 'regularisation law', which allows retroactive legalisation of settlements built on Palestinian properties without the consent of the legitimate private owners; awaits the Supreme Court decision regarding this new legislation;
7. Takes positive note of paragraph 8 of the Council conclusions of 18 January 2016 on the commitment by the EU and its Member States to ensure the full implementation of existing EU legislation and EU-Israel bilateral arrangements;
8. Calls for an end to the demolition of Palestinian homes and EU-funded structures and projects, the forced displacement of Palestinian families and the confiscation of Palestinian property in the West Bank, in accordance with the Quartet report; stresses the responsibility of relevant EU authorities in continuing to ensure that no EU funding can be directly or indirectly diverted to terrorist organisations or activities that incite these acts;
9. Recalls that compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law by states and non-state actors, including accountability for their actions, is a cornerstone of peace and security in the region;
10. Stresses that intra-Palestinian reconciliation is an important element for reaching the two-state solution and deplores continued Palestinian disunity; supports the EU's call on the Palestinian factions to make reconciliation and the return of the Palestinian Authority to the Gaza Strip a top priority; urges Palestinian forces to resume efforts towards reconciliation without delay, notably through the holding of the long-overdue presidential and legislative elections; emphasises that the Palestinian Authority must assume its government function in the Gaza Strip, including in the fields of security and civil administration and through its presence at the crossing points;
11. Stresses that militant activity and the illicit arms build-up feed instability and ultimately impede efforts to achieve a negotiated solution; calls on the Palestinian Authority Security Forces to conduct fully effective and timely operations to counteract the activities of these militant groups, such as firing rockets at Israel; stresses the imperative

need to prevent the arming of terrorist groups and their smuggling of weapons, manufacturing of rockets and building of tunnels;

12. Reiterates its call for an end to the blockade of the Gaza Strip and for the urgent reconstruction and rehabilitation of this area;
13. Reminds Member States of the Venice Declaration of June 1980 whereby EU Member States assumed their responsibility in the peace process; calls for a new EU Declaration to be adopted in June this year; asks the High Representative to use this new declaration to engage in setting up a bold and comprehensive European peace initiative in the region;
14. Calls for this European Union peace initiative to address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with the aim of achieving tangible results within a set timeframe, in the framework of the two-state solution, and with an international monitoring and implementation mechanism; stresses the importance of engaging with other international actors in this regard, in the framework of the Middle East Quartet and with regard to the Arab peace initiative in particular; calls for the effective use of existing European Union leverage and instruments in dealings with both parties in order to facilitate peace efforts, as coordinated EU action can deliver results;
15. Underlines that, in order to support a genuine European peace initiative, it is the primary duty of the Member States to contribute actively to the shaping of a united European position and to refrain from unilateral initiatives that weaken European action; underlines that European Heads of State and Government cannot ask the Union to be proactive in the region if their diverging positions prevent the Union from speaking with one voice through the High Representative;
16. Notes the potential of the Palestinian Arab community in Israel to play an important role in achieving a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and the importance of its involvement in and contribution to the peace process; calls for equal rights for all citizens of Israel, which is a basic precondition for fulfilling this role;
17. Calls for European Union support and protection to civil society actors, including human rights organisations, that contribute to peace efforts and confidence-building between Israelis and Palestinians on both sides, and welcomes the civil society contribution to the peace process through innovative new ideas and initiatives;
18. Suggests that a 'Parliamentarians for Peace' initiative be launched aimed at bringing together European, Israeli and Palestinian parliamentarians in order to help advance an agenda for peace and complement EU diplomatic efforts;
19. Underlines the need for the EU to foster initiatives that can contribute to rebuilding trust between political, non-state, and economic actors and establishing a pattern of cooperation on concrete issues; stresses, in this regard, the importance of policy areas where cooperation is imperative for the daily lives of citizens, in particular the areas of security, access to water, sanitation, energy resources and the growth of the Palestinian economy;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign

Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Quartet Representative, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Knesset and the Government of Israel, the President of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council.