

COMPROMISE

European Parliament resolution on situation in Gaza

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on the Middle East, in particular those of 2 February 2006 on the result of the Palestinian elections and the situation in East Jerusalem, 1 June 2006 on the humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian territories and the role of the EU and 7 September 2006 on the situation in the Middle East,

– having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions Nos 242 and 338,

– having regard to the Quartet's 'Roadmap for Peace' of 30 April 2003,

– having regard to the conclusion of the External Relations Council of 15 September 2006, 17 October 2006 and 13 November 2006,

– having regard to the Rule 103(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. Whereas the Israeli military operation in Gaza has resulted in over 350 deaths, including many civilians, since June 2006 and the Israeli attack in Beit Hanun on 8 November 2006 killed 19 Palestinians, mostly children and women

B. Extremely preoccupied about the fact that as a result of the massive devastation of public facilities and private homes, the disruption of hospitals, clinics and schools, the denial of access to water, food and electricity; the destruction of agricultural lands and the total blockade of the Gaza Strip, the humanitarian crisis has reached a catastrophic level,

C. Considérant que les attaques visant directement des biens de caractère civil et les attaques disproportionnées ou indiscriminées contre la population civile ont fait outrage aux droits fondamentaux tels que définis par le droit international et les Conventions de Genève,

D. whereas the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert expressed his distress and voiced sorrow for what he said was the result of a "technical failure" and the decision of the Israeli Army to initiate an internal investigation,

E. Whereas the right of a state to defend itself cannot justify any disproportionate or indiscriminate use of force and international humanitarian law strictly prohibits attacks on civilians,

F. Whereas the new cycle of violence threatens the efforts made by the Palestinian National Authority with the aim of forming a new Palestinian government of national unity,

G. Whereas the international community and the European Union provide considerable support to solve the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the West Bank, with special regard to the Temporary International Mechanism, but this assistance cannot meet all needs,

H. Deeply concerned about the implications of the recent appointment of Avigdor Lieberman as new deputy Prime Minister of Israel,

I. Whereas the Middle East peace process is in a political and diplomatic deadlock although a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is essential for the establishment of peace and security in the whole region,

J. Whereas the European Union, as a member of the Quartet, has a special responsibility for peace and security in the Middle East, which is Europe's neighbourhood, and whereas the instruments and methods for the coordination of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) must therefore be improved, including through the adoption of a common position in the framework of the CFSP and on the basis of Articles 15 and 16 of the EU Treaty,

1. Expresses its deepest condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims of the recent bombing in Beit Hanun and to all other innocent casualties;

2. Expresses its deep indignation for the Israeli military operation carried out in Beit Hanun and in Gaza; condemns the use of Israeli Army's disproportionate action, which is undermining any attempt to initiate the peace process;

3. Calls on the Israeli government to halt immediately its military operations in Gaza; reaffirms that there is no military solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

4. Calls on the Palestinian militias to bring an end to the firing of rockets against Israeli territory, which is indiscriminate and deliberately targets civilians, to respect the truce and to refrain from further escalation of the conflict;

5. Expresses its deep concern about the possible grave consequences of the current crisis, including further military and terrorist attacks, undermining the fragile political situation in the region as a whole;

6. Takes note of the blocking in the United Nations Security Council of a draft resolution on the situation on Gaza by the veto of the USA; regrets the lack of a strong and clear position of the international community on the current crisis;

7. Calls on the United States administration to reassess their role in the Quartet and in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in view of supporting an end to the violence and a new and genuine dialogue between the parties;

8. Calls on the Council and the Member States of the European Union to adopt a common position pursuant the Article 15 of the TEU in order to make an appropriate assessment of the current situation and to promote a serious attempt aimed at halting the violence and bringing the parties concerned to negotiations;

9. Invites the Quartet (UN, EU, USA and Russia) to act urgently for the resumption of negotiations with and between the parties concerned and a full implementation of the Roadmap in all its parts; declares once again, at this particular stage, that the solution to the

Middle East conflict is only possible through the negotiation of a firm and final peace agreement as set out in the Roadmap, without prior conditions, based on the existence of two democratic, sovereign and viable states, living peacefully side by side within secure and recognised international borders and that the continuing loss of civilian lives is unbearable;

10. Reiterates its proposal that the presence of a multinational force in Lebanon could be taken as an exemplary model to be followed in Gaza and the West Bank, in order to protect the civilian population on both sides; invites the Council, in the meantime, to launch an initiative to dispatch international military observers to Gaza and calls all parties to endorse and fully cooperate with such a proposal;

11. Calls on the Council to convene urgently the EU-Israel Association Council, in order to express the position of the European Union after the Israeli military operations in Gaza, with regard in particular to the full respect of Art. 2 of the Association Agreement;

12. Calls on the Council to address itself, within the framework of the EU-Palestinian Association Agreement, to the new Palestinian government of national unity in order to confront the issue of violence and security;

13. Stresses that human rights must be fully respected and the violation of international humanitarian law must be halted immediately in Gaza and the West Bank;

14. Supports the EU Presidency statement urging the Israeli government to cease all provocative activities in the Palestinian territories, including settlement building, the routing of the separation wall in the Palestinian territories, the indiscriminate military operations as well as the demolition of Palestinian homes;

15. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to provide in particular extra medical aid to the Palestinian hospitals, in particular in Gaza;

16. Calls on the Council and the Commission to continue to guarantee, together with the international community, essential humanitarian aid for the Palestinian population; demands that the TIM be reinforced and extended in terms of duration and resources; calls on the Israeli Government urgently to resume the transfer of withheld Palestinian tax and customs revenues;

17. Calls upon Israel to lift its economic blockade of Gaza; to facilitate trade between Palestinian territories, Israel and the world as a whole; to promote economic development in Gaza for the benefit of both Palestinians and Israelis; and to permit the movement of people, respecting the Agreement on Movement and Access in Rafah (EU-BAM), in Karni and at other border crossings in Gaza; calls on the EU to face its full responsibility on the implementation of this Agreement;

18. Reiterates its call for an immediate release of the Palestinian ministers and legislators in Israeli custody and the abducted Israeli soldier;

19. Welcomes the agreement reached by the President of the Palestinian Authority in order to promote a national dialogue between the Palestinian parties and the appointment of a new Palestinian Prime Minister who should form a new Palestinian government, which should act as a negotiating partner with the international community; considers that this could lead to the restoration of the economic aid to the Palestinian Authority;

20. Calls on the Council to make every effort to convene an international peace conference – such as the Madrid Conference in 1991 – in order to find a comprehensive, lasting and viable solution to the problems in the area, based on the relevant UNSC resolutions and considers that a unilateral approach by any of the parties concerned must be rejected;

21. Considers the involvement of the Arab League to be essential in this context; considers the 'Beirut Plan' of 2002, agreed by the member countries of the League of Arab States, and the Geneva Initiative, as important contributions to the negotiations, which should be duly taken into account;

22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative for CFSP, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Secretary General, the President of the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Israeli Knesset and government, the governments of the US and the Russian Federation, and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States.