



EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY



Brussels, 17 March 2009

RECOMMENDATION

of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

**adopted on the basis of the draft recommendation tabled on behalf of the Committee on
Political Affairs, Security and Human Rights**

on the situation in Gaza and the Middle East peace process

by Mrs Tokia Saïfi, Chair

The Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly,

- having regard to the Barcelona Declaration of 28 November 1995 establishing the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership,
- having regard to the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean of 13 July 2008,
- having regard to the Final Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Marseille of 3 and 4 November 2008,
- having regard to the declaration adopted at its extraordinary plenary session at the Dead Sea, Jordan, on 13 October 2008,
- having regard to the statement adopted by the EMPA Bureau on 20 January 2009,
- having regard to the report by the delegation of the EMPA enlarged Bureau, which visited the region (Cairo, Gaza, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Amman) from 22 to 24 February 2009,
- having regard to Resolution 194 of 11 December 1948 of the United Nations General Assembly and Resolutions 242 of 22 November 1967 (S/RES/242 (1967)), 338 of 22 October 1973 (S/RES/338 (1973)), 1397 of 12 March 2002 (S/RES/1397 (2002)), 1515 of 19 November 2003 (S/RES/1515 (2003)) and 1860 of 8 January 2009 (S/RES/1860 (2009)) of the UN Security Council,
- having regard to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War,
- having regard to the 1991 Madrid Conference, the 1993 Oslo Accords, the Quartet's Roadmap of 30 April 2003 and the commitments made at the Annapolis Conference of 27 November 2007,
- having regard to the Arab peace initiative of 28 March 2002,

Re: the situation in Gaza

1. Strongly condemns the targeting of the civilian population of Gaza, in breach of international law; also condemns the continuing rocket attacks by Hamas militias on the civilian population of southern Israel; expresses its deep sympathy towards the families of the victims in the Gaza Strip, Sderot and Ashkelon;
2. Urges the parties concerned to do everything within their power to ensure total compliance with the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel;
3. Reaffirms its determination to work to ensure respect for the right of peoples and individuals to live in peace, security and dignity;

4. Welcomes the establishment of a United Nations commission of inquiry into the tragic incidents in the Gaza Strip which left so many victims and significantly damaged UN facilities or the conduct of UN operations;
5. Considers that there should be an independent inquiry into the alleged violations of international humanitarian law, including the use of banned arms in civilian areas;
6. Calls for the unimpeded delivery and distribution of humanitarian aid throughout the Gaza Strip and, in order to do so, calls for the permanent reopening of all crossing points into the Gaza Strip and the lifting of the blockade in order to allow the unrestricted movement of goods and persons; calls on Israel to accept its responsibilities and make its contribution to the reconstruction of Gaza;
7. Calls on the Commission to forward to EMPA an assessment of the damage and an estimate of the cost of reconstruction in the Gaza Strip; calls on the donor countries to honour the pledges they announced at the conference in Sharm el-Sheikh via the European-Palestinian Socio-Economic Aid and Management Mechanism (PEGASE) and the World Bank Trust Fund;

Re: the Middle East peace process

8. Urges the parties involved to resume serious negotiations and to implement their obligations under the Roadmap so as to achieve the implementation, in the near future, of the two-State solution consisting in an independent, democratic, viable and contiguous Palestinian State living side by side with the State of Israel in peace and security and within secure, internationally recognised borders;
9. Strongly supports the Arab peace initiative, which provides a sound and appropriate basis for the conclusion of a lasting regional peace, and calls on the Israeli Government to respond to these proposals;
10. Encourages the efforts under way to achieve inter-Palestinian reconciliation with a view to forming a government of national consensus as rapidly as possible; welcomes the role of mediator played by Egypt in this dialogue;
11. Recalls that the construction of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and the demolition of houses remain illegal under international law and jeopardise the two-State solution; calls for a freeze on all settlement activity, including natural expansion, and the dismantling of all settlements, in accordance with the commitments made under the Roadmap;
12. Emphasises that the issue of prisoners has a major impact on the peace process and takes the view, in this connection, that the release of a significant number of Palestinians, both political prisoners and others, and also of the Israeli Corporal Gilad Shalit, would allow a climate of mutual confidence to be restored, which is indispensable to progress in the peace negotiations;

13. Reiterates, in this connection, its call for the release of its Palestinian parliamentary colleagues, including the Speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council;
14. Calls on the parties involved to honour their undertakings, to implement the relevant UN resolutions on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to implement the judgment handed down by the International Court of Justice concerning wall of separation;
15. Calls for the European Union and the Arab League to strengthen their political cooperation in the region in the long term, in order to play a role commensurate with their financial solidarity;
16. Stresses that the efforts made to improve mutual understanding between communities and cultures should not be compromised by the current situation in the Middle East and by the escalation of violence, which entails a rise in extremism, fundamentalism and anti-Semitism; strongly condemns racist and anti-Semitic acts and calls on the Member States of the Union for the Mediterranean to make the fight against intolerance, racism, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism a political priority;

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17. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Co-presidency of the Union for the Mediterranean, the parliaments, governments and institutions of the members of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.