Situation in the Middle East

2007/2573(RSP) - 18/06/2007

The Council adopted the following conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process:

- **Coup d'Etat**: the Council expresses its deep concern regarding the extremely serious events in Gaza. It condemns in the strongest possible terms the violent coup perpetrated by Hamas militias, in particular attacks against and the destruction of the legitimate security services of the Palestinian Authority, the summary execution of many of its members, the attacks against hospitals and the cruel treatment of captives. It deeply deplores the loss of human life, including civilians and humanitarian workers. The Council calls for the immediate cessation of all violence and hostilities, including in the West Bank, and for the restoration of law and order;
- **Palestinian National unity**: the Council supports the Arab League's call for restoring Palestinian National unity and the unity of Palestinian territory. The Council also supports ongoing efforts by the Egyptian government to mediate a cease-fire. It appeals to all the countries of the region to join these efforts and to help stop the supply of weapons to the militias;
- **Political situation**: the EU expresses its full support for President Abbas and his decisions taken within his mandate to declare a state of emergency and to install an emergency government for the Palestinian Territories under Prime Minister Fayyad, underlining the importance of the Palestinian basic law. All Palestinian parties should abide by his decisions. It recalls that reconciliation and national unity behind the programme of peace articulated by President Abbas is the only way to achieve Palestinian national goals;
- **Humanitarian situation in Gaza**: the EU will do its utmost to ensure the provision of emergency and humanitarian assistance to the population of Gaza, whom it will not abandon. Unimpeded access to humanitarian aid deliveries must be guaranteed. The extension of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) for a further three months until September 2007 will also contribute to the emergency relief. The EU calls on Israel to facilitate the provision of humanitarian help. The Council reiterates its call on Israel for the immediate release of withheld Palestinian tax and customs revenues;
- **Support**: the EU will resume normal relations with the Palestinian Authority immediately. With this objective, the EU will develop the conditions for urgent practical and financial assistance including: (i) direct financial support to the government; (ii) support to the Palestinian Civilian Police through the resumption of EUPOL COPPS; (iii) the resumption of the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) Rafah; (iv) intensive efforts to build the institutions of the future Palestinian state.

Lastly, the Council underlines that it has become all the more urgent to take forward a crediblepeace process which can give the Palestinian people the perspective of an independent, democratic and viable state living side by side with Israel, and bring peace and stability to the Middle East.