

Resolution on the Israeli government's decision to expand settlements in the West Bank

2012/2911(RSP) - 13/12/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Israeli government's decision to expand settlements in the West Bank.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA and ECR groups.

Parliament expresses its **deepest concern about the Israeli Government's announcement on 2 December 2012 regarding the planned construction of approximately 3 000 new housing units in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem**. It stresses that such expansion may represent a step undermining the prospects of a viable Palestine, with special regard to the E1 area, where settlement constructions would divide the West Bank in two, rendering impossible the creation of a viable, contiguous and sovereign Palestinian State with Jerusalem as the shared capital of both it and Israel.

Members also stress that **Israeli settlements in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem are illegal under international law**, and call for an immediate, complete and permanent freeze on all Israeli settlement construction and expansion activities, and for a stop to further evictions of Palestinian families from their homes and the demolition of Palestinian houses. At the same time, they **condemn the declarations made by the political leader of Hamas, Khaled Meshal, rejecting the recognition of the State of Israel and clearly refusing any Israeli presence in Jerusalem, and call on Hamas to recognise Israel's right to exist**.

Parliament calls again for **full and effective implementation of all existing EU legislation and EU-Israel bilateral agreements** by the EU and its Member States, and stresses that all provisions of the EU-Israel Association Agreement concerning the respect of human rights of the Palestinians should be respected. It reiterates the EU's commitment to ensure continued, full and effective implementation of existing European Union legislation and bilateral arrangements applicable to **settlement products**.

Reiterating its strong support for the two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as capital of both States, Parliament calls for the resumption of direct peace talks between the two parties, and on all parties to refrain from any unilateral action which could undermine or hinder peace efforts and the prospects for a negotiated peace agreement. It urges the EU and its Member States once again to play a **more active political role**, including within the Quartet, in efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. It supports the Vice-President/High Representative in her efforts to create a credible prospect of relaunching the peace process. Members urge the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government to relaunch the Middle East peace process. They stress, moreover the **importance of protecting the Palestinian population and its rights in Area C and in East Jerusalem**, which is essential for keeping the viability of the two-state solution alive.

Lastly, Parliament **deeply regrets the decision by the Israeli Government on 2 December 2012 to withhold USD 100 million in Palestinian tax revenues**, which undermines the Palestinian Authority's budget. It calls for the immediate transfer of these revenues and encourages involved parties to settle all outstanding financial disputes under the mediation of the EU. Members state that monthly tax transfers are a crucial element in the Palestinian Authority's budget.