Resolution on the EU’s role in the Middle East peace process

2015/2685(RSP) - 10/09/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 525 votes to 70, with 31 abstentions, a resolution on the EU’s role in the Middle East peace process.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, GUE/NGL, Greens/EFA groups.

Renew the peace process: deeply concerned at the persisting stalemate in the Middle East peace process, Parliament called for the **resumption of credible peace efforts without delay** whilst underlining the fact that any lasting solution to the conflict can only be achieved in a regional context with the involvement of all relevant regional stakeholders and the support of the international community.

Members called on both Israelis and Palestinians to **avoid steps which could spark further escalation**, which could prejudge the outcome of negotiations.

Two-state solution: Parliament reiterated its strong support for the two-state solution on the basis of the 1967 borders, with mutually agreed land swaps and 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 and mutual recognition, on the basis of the right of self–determination and full respect of international law.

Members stressed that **non-violent means and respect for human rights** and humanitarian law are the only way to achieve a just and lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

The resolution condemned the continued expansion of Israeli settlements, which violates international humanitarian law, fuels Palestinian resentment and undermines the viability and prospects of the two-state solution. In this regard, Parliament called on the Israeli authorities to **immediately halt and reverse their settlement policy**.

It also stressed that **rocket fire** by militant groups into Israeli territory is unacceptable and stressed once more the overwhelming need for **all terrorist groups in Gaza to disarm**.

Priority to civil rights: Parliament welcomed the **positive role** and necessary support that the EU wishes to provide in facilitating the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, it called for a fresh EU approach that genuinely serves the interests of peace and security of both Israelis and Palestinians.

According to Members, preserving the viability of the two-state solution through **concrete action** and ensuring **full respect for the rights of civilians on both sides** must be an immediate priority for the EU and the international community.

Role of the EU: Parliament urged the VP/HR and the EU Special Representative to **make better use of the political relations and institutional expertise of the EU and its Member States** in order to play a genuine political role in the peace process between Israelis and Palestinians, and between Arab states and Israel in a broader context.

Members called on the EU to fulfil its responsibilities as an influential player and to **take a bold and comprehensive peace initiative for the region**. The EU should play a key role in redefining the Quartet's objectives – which should be refocused on finding a political solution to the conflict.

Lifting the blockade of the Gaza strip: Parliament reiterated its call for an end to the blockade of the Gaza Strip and for the urgent reconstruction and rehabilitation of the area after the summer 2014 war, which must be a humanitarian aid priority for the EU and the international community. It urged **donors** to disburse as soon as possible their financial commitments made at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine ('Reconstructing Gaza') of 12 October 2014.

Expressing its deep concern at **UNRWA's serious funding crisis**, Parliament called for increased EU financial support for UNRWA and urged all other donors to live up to their promises to the agency.

Deploring the continued **Palestinian disunity**, Parliament supported 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.

Border assistance mission: Parliament welcomed the work done by the common security and defence policy (CSDP) police and rule of law mission (EUPOL COPPS) in the occupied Palestinian Territory in assisting the Palestinian Authority in building the institutions of a future State of Palestine in the areas of policing and criminal justice.

The resolution called for the **reactivation of the CSDP border assistance mission (EUBAM Rafah)**, with a more ambitious mandate and adequate means and personnel, in order to play a concrete role in the control of the Gaza Strip's borders with Egypt and Israel.