Recommendation on the crisis in the Middle East and the role of the European Union in the region

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Adopting the report by Mr Elmar Brok (PPE-DE, D) on the crisis in the Middle East and the role of the European Union in the region, the European Parliament urges the Council to adopt 'a common strategy for the Middle East and implement all relevant conflict prevention and crisis management instruments', the ultimate goal of which should be to establish a lasting peace in the region. This strategy should be based on the right of the Palestinians to a sovereign, safe, democratic, viable and peaceful State and the right of the State of Israel to exist in safety within secure, recognised and respected borders and on respect for international law and the resolutions of the United Nations, which implies Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and from East Jerusalem. The recommendation of the European Parliament firmly condemns terrorism and calls for the renunciation of the use of force and all forms of violence, and the adoption by the parties in the region of new measures designed to put an end to violence. Negotiations must resume as soon as possible on the basis of the recommendations contained in the Mitchell Report. The task of the EU is to make available to the conflicting parties and to the United Nations all appropriate military and civil crisis-management instruments. The recommendation calls for a political and diplomatic initiative at the earliest opportunity, which could take the form of a new conference with all the countries concerned. It calls on the Council to draw up a blueprint for large-scale international economic assistance for the region and to initiate immediate and large-scale use of the MEDA regional programme, to which end the programme budget would have to be increased. The European Union should increase its diplomatic presence in the region, coordinate the bilateral policies of its Member States and monitor the impact of its funding and operations. Parliament also considers it vitally important to intensify all types of contact at the political and parliamentary levels by holding more regular meetings with the region's parliaments and political parties and with its civil society, particularly by sending a very high-level European Parliament delegation to the region. Parliament placed particular emphasis on the need to adopt new initiatives to help bring an end to the violence, in view of the intolerable situation of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories and of the Israeli victims of mindless terrorism.