Resolution on the situation in the Middle East

2004/2632(RSP) - 27/01/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in the Middle East.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, Greens /EFA, GUE/NGL and UEN groups.

Welcoming the success of the first presidential election since 1996, Parliament pays tribute to the Palestinian people, and in particular the Palestinian women, who helped secure the electoral operations and participated strongly in the vote. It considers that the new President of the Palestinian Authority, **Mahmoud Abbas**, and the other candidates conducted the campaign in a responsible manner under the circumstances, respecting international standards.

Parliament also welcomes the effectiveness of the EU observation mission and calls on the Council and the Commission to prepare another mission for the legislative elections of July 2005 with the aim of supporting pluralism and balanced access to the media for all the candidates.

Parliament also invites the new Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to recognise the window of opportunity offered by the results of the elections and to **re-launch negotiations**. The EU is called upon to take an urgent initiative, in the framework of the Quartet, and especially vis-à-vis the USA, in accordance with their complementary roles in the peace process, in order to open a new phase of strong mutual cooperation by jointly relaunching their efforts to bring peace to the region. Parliament calls on the Council, the High Representative for the CFSP and the Commission to fully play their role in the process, to continue assistance to the Palestinian Authority and people and to develop dialogue with Israel, in the framework of the Barcelona Process. President Abbas is encouraged to act upon his willingness to end violence and to reform and to reinforce control over the Palestinian security corps and to fully engage in dialogue with all concerned parties.

Parliament believes that full political support by the USA and the EU, and active cooperation from the Israelis, are essential in order to achieve these goals. It declares once again that the solution to the Middle East conflict is only possible through the negotiation of a **firm and final peace agreement** as set out in the Roadmap, which is still valid, without prior conditions, based on the existence of **two democratic, sovereign and viable states**, living peacefully side by side within secure and recognised borders.

Parliament believes that a lasting peace can only be sustained with a genuine bottom-up approach involving the civil societies of both sides striving for dialogue. It calls, in this regard, on the Quartet to make full use of the Geneva Accord as a complement to the Road Map and to facilitate the continuation of the negotiations between these civil societies within this framework.

Parliament condemns all **terrorist attacks** and any acts of violence from both sides. It demands that the armed Palestinian groups refrain from any attacks and to put an end to extrajudicial killings. It calls on the Israeli Government, as a credible first step in the implementation of the Roadmap, to implement the **withdrawal from Gaza** and other parts of the Occupied Territories by involving and negotiating with **Egypt**, the first neighbour to approve this project, as well as the Palestinian authorities under the verification of an international observer mission. It reiterates its call to the Israeli Government to stop the **expansion of settlements**, notably in the Jerusalem area, to halt the construction of the wall.

Lastly, Parliament confirms the EU's support for the peace process and puts forward a proposal for an economic development plan which should be monitored by the Union, in order to give the region a solid basis for prosperity and stability.