

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Middle East Peace Process, in particular those of 17 December 2014 on recognition of Palestine statehood, of 18 September 2014 on Israel-Palestine after the Gaza war and the role of the EU, and of 5 July 2012 on EU policy on the West Bank and East Jerusalem,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process of 20 July 2015,
- having regard to the Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the formation of the new Israeli Government of 7 May 2015, and to the Statements by her Spokesperson on today's arson attack in the West Bank of 31 July 2015 and on the recent Israeli decisions for further settlement expansion of 29 July 2015,
- having regard to the Local EU statement on demolitions in Area C and on construction work on the separation barrier at Cremisan of 24 August 2015;
- having regard to the Joint Statement on EU support to UNRWA by HR/VP Federica Mogherini, EU Commissioner for Neighborhood policy and Enlargement negotiations, Johannes Hahn, and Commissioner for Humanitarian aid and crisis management, Christos Stylianides of 19 August 2015,
 - having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the State of Israel, of the other part,

- having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Interim Association Agreement on trade and cooperation between the European Community, of the one part, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, of the other part,
- having regard to relevant UN General Assembly and UN Security Council resolutions,
- having regard to the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949,
- having regard to the Diplomatic Outline for Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Steps for creating a diplomatic horizon and generating positive momentum toward an agreement by Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Yehiel Hilik Bar of 27 July 2015,
- having regard to Rule 123 (2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the 2013-2014 initiative of US Secretary of State John Kerry and the 2014 summer war in the Gaza Strip have been followed by another stalemate in the Middle East Peace Process between Israelis and Palestinians; whereas efforts are being made in the UN Security Council to resume the peace process; whereas Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Yehiel Hilik Bar presented a Diplomatic Outline for Resolving the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict and Steps for creating a diplomatic horizon and generating positive momentum toward an agreement in July 2015 with the support of prominent leaders of the Israeli opposition;

B. whereas the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has a major impact on the whole Middle East; whereas the violent crisis in Syria, the rise of the so-called Islamic State, increasing radicalism and the spread of terrorism in the Middle East create significant security threats for Israel and further aggravate the suffering of Palestinians in the region, but also create shared interests between the Arab states and Israel, while the nuclear deal with Iran offers a unique momentum for the peace process, which should not be missed;

C. whereas High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini, who made her first official visit abroad in this capacity to Israel and to Palestine in November 2014, has demonstrated her personal commitment to renew and intensify the EU's engagement in the Middle East Peace Process; whereas Fernando Gentilini has been appointed the new EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process;

D. whereas the European Parliament has repeatedly expressed its support for the two-state solution with the State of Israel within secure and recognised borders and an independent, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side-by-side in peace and security along the 1967 borders, with mutually agreed land swaps, and Jerusalem as capital of both states; whereas most of the key parameters of the two-state solution are known from previous negotiations between both sides;

E. whereas an estimated 600.000 Jewish settlers live in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem; whereas the continued demolition of Palestinian homes and the displacement of Palestinian families, the restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians and on their access to agricultural lands, Jewish settler violence, and the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, as the occupying power, in this area constitute a fundamental threat to the two-state solution;

F. whereas, according to the Palestinian Monitoring Group, Jewish settlers have carried out more than 11.000 attacks against Palestinians

in the West Bank since 2004; whereas, according to Israeli Human Rights organisation Yesh Din, only 1.9 per cent of cases of settler violence brought before the courts between 2005 and 2014 ended in successful prosecution;

G. whereas the status of Jerusalem remains a key issue in the Middle East Peace Process; whereas the EU and the international community have never accepted the unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem by Israel; whereas Palestinians living in East Jerusalem continue to suffer from the lack of secure legal residency status, the confiscation of their land, and systemic discrimination in access to public services and in planning and building, as a result of Israeli government policies aimed at changing the demographic makeup of the area;

H. whereas Palestinian unity is an essential part of the Middle East Peace Process and a necessary condition for the two-state solution; whereas, however, it continues to be undermined by intra-Palestinian political tensions as well as by the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip and the lack of effective authority of the Palestinian Authority in this area;

I. whereas the Gaza Strip, de facto controlled by Hamas, has been under blockade since 2007; whereas this blockade has destroyed its economy, leading to high unemployment and a lack of basic goods, and has a strong psychological effect on the population, with special regard to the youth; whereas the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has been further aggravated as a result of the 2014 summer war; whereas the EU has repeatedly condemned the rocket attacks from Gaza into Israeli territory, and called for the effective prevention of arms smuggling into the Strip;

J. whereas 5700 Palestinian detainees and prisoners – including 160 children, 26 women and 400 administrative detainees – are held in Israeli jails; whereas ten members of the Palestinian Legislative Council,

including three of them under administrative detention, are detained in Israeli prisons; whereas, on 30 July 2015, the Knesset adopted the Force-Feeding Law, which authorizes the forcible feeding of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike;

K. Whereas UNRWA - which is delivering vital services to Palestine refugees in the occupied Palestinian Territory but also in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria - has been facing the most severe funding crisis of its history; whereas the EU and its Member States remain the largest donor to UNRWA covering almost 40 per cent of the total support to the Agency;

1. Is deeply concerned about the persisting stalemate in the Middle East Peace Process between Israelis and Palestinians and calls for the resumption of credible peace efforts between both sides without delay with the aim of achieving genuine and tangible results in the framework of a set timetable;

2. Supports the ongoing efforts in the UN Security Council, notably the initiative taken by France, to resume peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians through a resolution setting a framework and a timetable for this process; calls, however, for a comprehensive European peace initiative should the current stalemate in the peace process persist; welcomes the diplomatic outline launched by Deputy Speaker of the Knesset Yehiel Hilik Bar;

3. Reiterates its strong support for the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, leading to two states for two peoples, with the State of Israel within secure and recognised borders and an independent, contiguous and viable State of Palestine living side-by-side in peace and security and mutual recognition along the 1967 borders, with mutually agreed land swaps, and Jerusalem as capital of both states;

4. Stresses that preserving the viability of the two-state solution must be an immediate priority for the EU and the international community; welcomes in this regard the EU initiative to launch a structured dialogue with Israel on the situation in the West Bank and the preservation of the two-state solution;

5. Stresses again that non-violent means are the only way to achieve peace between Israelis and Palestinians through negotiations leading to a final status agreement ending all mutual claims; condemns all acts of violence attacking or endangering civilians on both sides; reiterates its strong commitment to the security of Israel; continues to support the policy of non-violent resistance of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas;

6. Underlines that any lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can only be achieved in a regional context with the support of the international community; stresses the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative in this regard, and calls for an official Israeli response to it; calls for the involvement of all relevant regional stakeholders in the peace process, with special regard to the Arab League as well as Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, which have particular interests in the issues of border and refugees;

7. Emphasises that the time has come for the EU to play a prominent political role in the Middle East Peace Process; welcomes the personal commitment of the High Representative/Vice-President and strongly supports her efforts in this regard; welcomes the EU's engagement, as expressed in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015, to work actively on a renewed multilateral approach to the peace process in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, and to engage in joint work with regional partners on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative;

stresses, however, that the EU should not only engage but play a leading role in this process;

8. Urges the High Representative/Vice-President to make effective use of all existing EU instruments, including positive and negative incentives, which provide a leverage on Israel and on the Palestinians in order to achieve the two-state solution; calls in this spirit for continued, full and effective implementation of all relevant EU legislation and guidelines as well as the EU's bilateral agreements with both sides, including Article 2 of the EU-Israel Association Agreement and the EU-PLO Interim Association Agreement;

9. Reminds of the commitment expressed by the Foreign Affairs Council in its conclusions of 13 December 2013 - which has been re-confirmed in various EU conclusions and statements over the past two years - stating that „the EU will provide an unprecedented package of European political, economic and security support to both parties in the context of a final status agreement. In the event of a final peace agreement the European Union will offer Israel and the future state of Palestine a Special Privileged Partnership including increased access to the European markets, closer cultural and scientific links, facilitation of trade and investments as well as promotion of business to business relations. Enhanced political dialogue and security cooperation will also be offered to both states”;

10. Stresses that no EU funding to Israeli, European or other entities can be used in a way that directly or indirectly contribute to the building or expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, or to Israeli activities violating international humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian Territory; welcomes in this regard the European Commission Guidelines on the eligibility of Israeli entities and

their activities in the territories occupied by Israel since June 1967 for grants, prizes and financial instruments funded by the EU from 2014 onwards of 19 July 2013, and calls for its full implementation; stresses the responsibility of relevant EU authorities in ensuring that no EU funding to Palestinians can be directly or indirectly diverted to terrorist organisations or activities;

11. Is determined to strengthen its cooperation with Israeli and Palestinian political and civil society actors showing a genuine commitment to achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East; recalls its decision to launch a 'Parliamentarians for Peace' initiative as a forum to intensify its dialogue with democratically elected members of the Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council;

12. Reminds of the potential of Arab citizens of Israel to play an important role in achieving peace between Israelis and Palestinians, while noting the rise of the Joint Arab List as the third political force in the Knesset; stresses that the two-state solution must guarantee full respect for the dignity and for the individual and collective rights of ethnic and religious minorities in both states; encourages Israel to work towards a broader integration of Arab citizens of the country in the public sector as well as socially, economically and politically; underlines also the importance of consulting the religious leaderships on both sides in the peace process;

13. Deplores the continued illegal settlement building and expansion activities of Israel in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, and the recent announcement of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the construction of 300 new settlement units in Beit El and 500 units in East Jerusalem; stresses that illegal Israeli settlement construction in the occupied Palestinian Territory goes against the spirit of peace and constitutes a major obstacle to peace efforts; welcomes the EU's

commitment, as reiterated in the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 20 July 2015, to ensure that all agreements between the EU and Israel must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967; calls also, in line with the EU's longstanding policy in this regard, for the labelling of Israeli settlement produce on the EU market, which could lead to a ban on these products should Israeli settlement construction activities continue;

14. Expresses its deep concern - recalling its resolution of 5 July 2012 - about the further deteriorating situation of the Palestinian population in the West Bank, in particular in Area C and in East Jerusalem, due to continued Israeli settlement building and expansion activities, restrictions on the freedom of movement of Palestinians, the demolition of Palestinian homes and the displacement of Palestinian families, Jewish settler violence, and the exploitation of natural resources by Israel, as the occupying power, which undermine the viability of the two-state solution; calls on Israeli authorities to prevent the forced transfer of the population and the demolition of Palestinian housing and infrastructure in Abu Nawar and Susiya villages;

15. Condemns in the strongest terms the recent attacks by Jewish settlers against Palestinians, in particular the killing of Ali Dawabshah, an 18-month-old Palestinian toddler, and his father in the village of Duma, and extends its condolences to their family; is deeply concerned about increasing settler violence in the West Bank, which has a direct link to the settlement policy of the Israeli government; welcomes the statements made by Israeli President Reuven Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in which they condemned the attack against the Dawabshah family and called it a terrorist act, but reminds Israel of her full responsibility to protect the Palestinian population in the occupied territory against the attacks and harassment by Jewish settlers and to bring all perpetrators of settler violence to justice;

16. Reiterates its support for the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people; continues to support the recognition of Palestinian statehood and the mutual recognition by Israel and Palestine, as two nation states, paving the way to a final status agreement; welcomes the Palestinian membership in the International Criminal Court;

17. Reiterates its call for genuine Palestinian unity, which is an essential part of the Middle East Peace Process; regrets the recent setbacks in the Palestinian reconciliation process following the partial reshuffle of the national consensus government in late July 2015; takes note of the announcement of President Mahmoud Abbas about his stepping down as head of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, along with a number of members of the PLO Executive Committee; reiterates its call for presidential and parliamentary elections in Palestine, which should strengthen the democratic legitimacy of Palestinian political leadership and should contribute to intra-Palestinian reconciliation;

18. Reiterates its call for the urgent reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Gaza Strip after the 2014 summer war, which must be a humanitarian aid priority for the EU and the international community; commends the heroic work of UNRWA in this regard; calls on international donors to fulfil their pledges made at the 2014 October Cairo Conference; calls for an immediate end to the blockade, which is a collective punishment of the local population, and for the economic revival of Gaza, as the current status quo is unsustainable and plays into hands of extremists; reiterates that the stability and prosperity of Gaza serves Israel's own interest and security; welcomes the recent positive steps made by Israel in easing the blockade, encourages her to continue on this path as well as the Palestinian Authority to respond positively; urges again the Palestinian Authority to assume its government function in the Gaza Strip, and calls for an immediate and definite end to the launching of rockets from this area into Israeli territory;

19. Calls again for the release of all Palestinian political prisoners, with special regard to members of the Palestinian Legislative Council; calls for full respect for the right of Palestinian detainees and prisoners in Israeli jails, including of those on hunger strike; expresses its concerns about the Force-Feeding Law adopted by the Knesset on 30 July 2015, and stresses that this Law must be implemented in strict compliance with international human rights law and standards;

20. Expresses its deep concern about the serious funding crisis of UNRWA; calls for increased EU financial support for UNRWA, and urges all other donors to step up their funding to the Agency, but calls also for the underlying core issue of Palestine refugees to be addressed; commends and congratulates UNRWA for its extraordinary efforts which made it possible to declare the 2015/2016 school year for Palestine refugee pupils open;

21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy/Vice President of the Commission, the EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, the parliaments and governments of Member States, the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Knesset, the President and the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Palestinian Authority, the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, the parliaments and governments of Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, and the Commissioner-General of UNRWA.