

Thursday 17 June 2010

Israeli military operation against the humanitarian flotilla and the Gaza blockade

P7_TA(2010)0235

European Parliament resolution of 17 June 2010 on the Israeli military operation against the humanitarian flotilla and the Gaza blockade

(2011/C 236 E/16)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Gaza, in particular those of 15 January 2009 on the situation in the Gaza Strip ⁽¹⁾ and of 18 February 2009 on humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip ⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to the Venice Declaration of 1980,
 - having regard to the previous Middle East Quartet statements, in particular that of 19 March 2010 reaffirming the fundamental principles laid down in Trieste on 26 June 2009 and that of 11 May 2010 on the renewal of proximity talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians,
 - having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions 1860 of 8 January 2009 (S/RES/1860(2009)) and 1850 of 16 December 2008 (S/RES/1850(2008)),
 - having regard to the Declaration by High Representative/Vice President of the Commission Catherine Ashton on behalf of the EU on the Israeli military operation against the flotilla issued on 31 May 2010,
 - having regard to the Presidential Statement of the UN Security Council (S/9940) of 31 May 2010,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process of 8 December 2009,
 - having regard to the statement by the President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, of 31 May 2010,
 - having regard to the Resolution adopted by the United Nations Human Rights Council on the Grave Attacks by Israeli Forces against the Humanitarian Boat Convoy of 2 June 2010,
 - having regard to the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the WHO on 18 May 2010,
 - having regard to the Report by the World Food Programme and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) published in November 2009 on the situation in Gaza,
 - having regard to Rule 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Israel's military operation, in international waters, on 31 May 2010 against a humanitarian aid flotilla bound for Gaza resulted in the deaths of nine civilians and the wounding of 38 civilians and seven Israeli soldiers,
- B. whereas the border crossings in and out of Gaza have been closed since June 2007, after Hamas took power by military means, and the blockade on the movement of people and goods has increased poverty, paralysed reconstruction and decimated the economy in the Gaza Strip, creating a rampant black market controlled by Hamas, among others; whereas this blockade has not resulted in the release of Gilad Shalit as expected by the Israeli authorities, which has been repeatedly called for by the European Parliament; whereas this blockade has not achieved its aim of undermining extremists and, as it affects especially the most vulnerable parts of the population, has given rise to growing radicalisation,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 46 E, 24.2.2010, p. 100.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 76 E, 25.3.2010, p. 1.

Thursday 17 June 2010

- C. whereas according to previous statements by UN organs, the blockade on the Gaza Strip represents collective punishment in contravention of international humanitarian law,
- D. whereas 80 % of the Gazan population is dependent on food aid, more than 60 % are affected by food insecurity, unemployment is around 50 % and sanitary and environmental conditions have seriously deteriorated,
- E. whereas only 3 600 truckloads of food aid entered Gaza in the first three months of this year, as opposed to 36 000 during the first three months of 2007, and whereas only 81 products are allowed into Gaza while the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) estimates that 6 000 products are required to meet basic humanitarian needs,
- F. whereas the Palestinian Territories are the largest third-country recipient of EU funds and this support has played an important role in the attempt to alleviate the humanitarian disaster in the Gaza Strip; whereas the EU continues to provide essential humanitarian assistance in the Gaza Strip, including through UNRWA,
- G. whereas the two-state solution remains the essential basis for lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians and therefore any unilateral step that may undermine this prospect should be avoided; whereas ongoing proximity talks may lead to the resumption of direct peace negotiations with a view to establishing a viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the State of Israel,
- H. whereas to date Hamas continues to prevent the entry of the flotilla's humanitarian cargo into Gaza,
1. Extends its condolences to the families of the victims;
 2. Condemns the attack against the flotilla in international waters, which is a breach of international law;
 3. Calls for a prompt, international and impartial inquiry into this attack, insists that the principles of accountability and liability be upheld and urges the HR/VP and EU Member States to take action to ensure that all appropriate steps are taken in order to make this demand effective;
 4. Urges Israel to immediately end the blockade on Gaza, which has resulted in a humanitarian disaster and increasing radicalisation, which is becoming a source of insecurity for Israel and for the region as a whole;
 5. Demands that all attacks against Israel cease immediately and warns that those who perpetrate them must face their full responsibility;
 6. Urges the HR/VP and EU Member States to take steps to ensure the sustainable opening of all the crossing points to and from Gaza, including the port of Gaza, with adequate international end-use monitoring, to allow the unimpeded flow of humanitarian and commercial goods necessary for reconstruction and a self-supporting economy, as well as currency flows and free movement of people;
 7. Urges the HR/VP to immediately take the initiative by submitting an EU plan to the Quartet with the aim of ending the blockade of Gaza and addressing Israeli security concerns by ensuring international monitoring of the crossings, including the reappraisal of the mandate of the EU Border Assistance Mission (EU-BAM), potentially with a maritime dimension, as well as its reactivation, and deploying an international naval force to monitor the Gaza seashore;
 8. Recalls that, even if the EU is ready to extend its assistance package to Palestinians, this commitment is not open-ended and insists that, while humanitarian aid must remain unconditional, the EU must play a political role which delivers tangible results towards the creation of a viable Palestinian state which are consistent with its significant financial assistance and economic weight in the region;

Thursday 17 June 2010

9. Expresses its support for the proximity talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and underlines the need for its continuation with a view to the resumption of direct negotiation;
10. Is convinced that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive reshaping of EU policy towards the Middle East to perform a decisive and coherent political role, accompanied by effective diplomatic tools, in the interests of peace and security in this neighbouring region of vital strategic interest to the EU; considers that this should extend to all EU policies, including, among others, trade and development policies;
11. Commends the work carried out by UNRWA and, aware of the financial shortfall it will face before the end of this year, calls on the international donor community to honour its existing pledges and to increase further its contributions;
12. Notes that the recent events have considerably damaged relations between Turkey and Israel; encourages the Turkish Government to focus its diplomatic and political efforts on easing the plight of the Palestinian people and to contribute to the Middle East peace process;
13. Welcomes the recent opening of the Rafah crossing by the Egyptian authorities;
14. Calls for the immediate release of the Israeli sergeant Gilad Shalit, who was kidnapped by Hamas on Israeli soil on 25 June 2006 and who has been held incommunicado in Gaza ever since;
15. Urges the Council to take steps to convene without any delay the EU-Israel Association Council in order to discuss the current situation;
16. Urges the Council also to take steps to convene the EU-Palestinian Authority Joint Committee;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Secretary General, the Quartet Envoy to the Middle East, the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, the Israeli Government, the Knesset, the President of the Palestinian Authority, the Palestinian Legislative Council, the Government and Parliament of Turkey, and the Government and Parliament of Egypt.

Trade in goods used for torture

P7_TA(2010)0236

European Parliament resolution of 17 June 2010 on implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1236/2005 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

(2011/C 236 E/17)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the absolute prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, a prohibition which applies in all circumstances and, as a peremptory norm in international law, to all states,
- having regard to the articulation of this prohibition in a number of international and regional human rights instruments and documents, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture), the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,