

European Green Party Congress

Rome, 20th - 22nd February 2004

Accepted Resolution

The Situation of Palestinians at the Gaza Strip & the West Bank

Finding a lasting political solution to the Middle East conflict is one of the central challenges of our time. Israelis and Palestinians should be able to live peacefully together as neighbours in freedom, justice and dignity, within secure and recognised boundaries, free from terror and violence. The road map, the Peace Plan put forward by the Quartet (USA, EU, UN and Russia), has not yet been able to restart the peace process. It requires an active policy on the part of all stake holders, as well as the courage of the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli Government to return to the negotiating table and to be prepared to make serious concessions that will pave the way to a permanent two-state-solution.

The European Greens reaffirm their support for Israel's right to exist. This includes the right of every citizen to live within secure boundaries free from fear, terror and violence. The European Greens condemn in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks perpetrated against men, women and children in Israel. They cannot in any way be justified and it is imperative that they be stopped.

In protecting its citizens from terrorist attacks and threats Israel must make every effort to prevent casualties among the Palestinian civil population. The pertinent provisions of international law must be observed. Israel is called on to cease building new settlements, to remove the settlements erected after March 2001, to lift the obstacles impeding the daily lives of the Palestinian civil population or their visitors and not to pre-empt the outcome of concluding negotiations by erecting walls and fences on the other side of the Green line.

We, the European Greens are deeply worried about the current situation faced by the Palestinians at the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Palestinians today, especially at the Gaza Strip, are deprived of their basic human rights of employment, health care and freedom of movement and are also facing overpopulation and environmental degradation. We believe that the present situation is such that it only helps to perpetuate desperation and fanaticism on both sides.

The European Greens recognize the legitimate right of the Palestinians to live in a democratic state that exists in peace and freedom side by side with Israel. The existence of two viable states, bound together in collective security in a regional peace and guaranteed by the international community, is a central element on the path to the peaceful co-existence of both peoples.

We urge all parties involved to end the cycle of violence and start building bridges of understanding and goodwill between them. As a measure of goodwill we believe that NGO's, volunteers and international organizations offering humanitarian aid, medical assistance and environmental work should be encouraged and helped to continue their work by all parties involved and especially by the Israeli government.

We support and applaud the work done by NGO's such as the Doctors of the World offering free operations to Palestinian children at the Gaza Strip and hope that more will follow.

The European Greens welcome initiatives on the part of Israelis and Palestinians that contain concrete proposals for a peace settlement. It welcomes in particular the Geneva Initiative which presented detailed Proposals for resolving the major contentious issues. The Initiative demands compromises from both sides but also offers long term peace prospects.

For a stable and lasting peace in the Middle East to be ensured, the regions neighbours also need to participate in the peace process. The European Greens hope that the Arab League will affirm its support for the Declaration of the Beirut summit in 2002 on a comprehensive peace with Israel and, beyond this, respond positively to the Geneva Initiative.