

PRESS RELEASE

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Now is not the time to recognize a Palestinian state

The Norwegian Parliament is contemplating a resolution to ask the Norwegian government “to be prepared to recognise Palestine as a separate state at a time when recognition can have a positive impact on a peace process and without prejudice to a final peace agreement.”

In our view the massacre of 7th October – which was at the time, and has since been approved, by a very large part of the Palestinians in Gaza and in the West Bank – has demonstrated that a peaceful Palestinian state adjacent to the State of Israel is, for the foreseeable future, a bridge too far.

The reality must be acknowledged that not only Hamas, but all relevant Palestinian political organizations – including the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority that claim to represent and govern the Palestinian people – do not aim to establish an independent, democratically accountable and peaceful state side-by-side with Israel. Rather, their goal is to destroy the Jewish state.

Israel was established as a Jewish state and has the inherent right to ensure that it is free and secure from hostile acts or threats of force by foreign states and non-state actors. Israel cannot be expected to accept any solution that compromises its self-defense.

In our view, a new European approach towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is required. These are some of the aspects that need to be addressed:

1. The regional dimension of the conflict must now be recognized. Instead of appeasement, Europe must directly confront the role of Iran, Qatar, and Turkey in particular in funding, exporting and enabling extremism and terrorism.
2. Hamas, Hezbollah, IRGC, PFLP and all other Islamist jihad groups and organizations that promote terror must be held accountable. Their proxies and front organizations on European soil must be removed.
3. The UNRWA system must be dismantled, and a permanent solution found for the status of Palestinian refugees. The UNRWA system has perpetuated the myth of the Palestinian “right of return” and institutionalized an educational system promoting hatred. There are multiple cases in which UNRWA personnel and facilities have been infiltrated by terror organizations.
4. Europe must support the development of a new paradigm of cooperation and peace in the region – for example, the expansion of the Abraham Accords, and (as recently announced in the G20) collaboration between India, Saudi Arabia, the United States, Israel, the EU and others to establish a rail and shipping corridor that will link the subcontinent with the Middle East and Europe.

5. European support of Palestinian self-determination claims (including claims to statehood) must be made conditional on genuine acceptance of the right of the Jewish State of Israel to exist, the jettisoning of all ties leading to extremism to external actors such as Iran and Qatar and other extremist forces of the radical Islamist camp, and the eradication of the corrupt political culture of the Palestinian Authority and PLO.
6. Europe must oppose the weaponization of international law, and the demonization of Israel as an apartheid state. To be clear, Palestinians have a right to self-determination but not an *à priori* right to a full-fledged sovereign state. The rule of law requires the EU to interpret and apply international law concepts fairly, objectively and consistently. The EU and its member states to not apply the same rules to other peoples and nations as they apply to the Palestinians. Instrumentalizing international law concerning statehood, territorial sovereignty, self-determination and occupation by using double standards is an abuse of international law.
7. The EU must support the terms and conditions agreed in the Oslo Accords. This includes acknowledging Israel's jurisdiction in Area C, and a new approach to peaceful cooperation that does not pre-determine the outcome of negotiations on East Jerusalem and the legitimacy of Israel's territorial claims in relation to the West Bank.
8. The EU and its member states must review and reform their internal processes for managing support for Palestinian entities. Support must promote education and fundamental values that protect the rule of law, civil, religious, and political rights of everybody, and encouragement of personal liberty and equality, ensuring that all funding promotes cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians, and that no funding is misused to support terror or extremism. All transfers must be transparent and accessible to civil society. Equally transparent mechanisms must be established for the submission and review of incriminating information about recipients of funds by third parties. In addition, the allocation of German funds must be subject to regular, independent and enforceable audits by either the parliamentary Budgetary Committee or the Federal Audit Office.
9. It must be recognized that the UN's role in relation to the conflict has not promoted peace and needs to be reformed.
10. A long-term solution for the government of Gaza will need to be found, which is likely to require some form of Israeli control.

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