



## Adopted resolution

### Resolution on the Middle East

The PES Congress, gathered in Porto on December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2006, expresses its deepest concern in front of the social, political and economic situation in the Middle East and more particularly with regards to the Lebanese and Israeli-Palestinian conflicts and their consequences for a region that legitimately aspires to peace, political stability as well as social and economic progress.

As European socialists and social democrats, we certainly are not indifferent to the causes and consequences of the horrors and the fear that are now bringing the Palestinian, Israeli, Lebanese and Iraqi people to their knees. The PES strongly condemns terrorist actions and organisations. The situation has deteriorated in such a way that it now calls for decisive and urgent action on our part, both as members of the European Union and as countries showing commitment within the international community.

The PES is closely following the difficult situation in Lebanon. The PES calls on political actors and citizens in Lebanon to solve peacefully and democratically their divergences to overcome the current moment of tensions. The PES gives its full support to the Lebanese government as a warrant of democratic progresses in Lebanon. The Lebanese government must continue its action to rebuild the country as a free and independent state without encountering treats and undemocratic practices.

The PES firmly condemns the use of violence for political means and the attacks and killings of politicians and famous public figures. The aim of setting up an International Court on the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri must be achieved.

The PES is convinced that the conflict between Palestine and Israel must be the top priority of the international community. The right of Israel to exist and live in Peace right and security must be fully recognised and guaranteed by the international community and all states and players in the region. A viable Palestinian state, based on the 1967 borders should be quickly established on the basis of the Quartet Road map.

The PES is deeply worried by the deteriorating economic, social and humanitarian situation in the Gaza strip. The recent cease fire must lead to a new situation in term of infrastructures reconstruction; circulation of persons and of goods; improved social and healthcare services;



release of customs taxes blocked by Israel; right for security for the inhabitants of the Gaza strip and a stabilisation of the political situation.

The PES supports the joint Gerona initiative on the Middle East based on the following elements:

- Immediate discontinuation of violence in Palestine and in Israel,
- Creation of a national unity government in Palestine, which will then be recognized by the international community,
- Exchange of prisoners including the Israeli soldier kidnapped a few months ago in Gaza, as well as the many detained Palestinian ministers and MPs,
- Reopening of a political dialogue between Israel and Palestine, with a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Abu Mazen,
- Sending of an international observation mission to Gaza in order to strengthen the cease fire,
- Broadening of the consensus in international bodies and forums, and organization of a peace conference on the Middle East with clear commitments between the parties involved.

The PES calls on the European Union to be at the forefront of the efforts for peace and dialogue in the area. Europe and its institutions are increasingly committed and involved in the Middle East peace process, as demonstrated by the UNIFIL and the EUBAM in Rafah. The process must now allow for the participation of more countries and political groupings and echo new voices that are forcefully resounding. We suggest that the political dialogue started within the framework of the Euromed initiative be immediately reactivated by the European Union so that it can contribute to looking for solutions to establish sustainable peace and dialogue, and achieve development for the whole region. The Barcelona Process has been a turning point for the European Union in front of the many cooperation challenges related to human rights, security, sustainable development, demographics, and cultural and economic cooperation that exist with the Mediterranean and Euro-African areas.

The PES calls on to foster the dialogue with the Arab World. It is crucial to develop the initiative of the Alliance of civilisations to prevent conflicts based on nationalism, fundamentalism, religious differences while on the contrary, cultural diversity is part of our world heritage.

The PES will launch a High level Group on the Middle East that will be dedicated to promote these visions to open up a new era of stability and prosperity in a democratised region. The PES supports campaigns in order to involve PES activists.

The PES expresses its support to all democratic forces in the region which promote justice, human rights, open societies and progressive values and will work in close cooperation with the SI and its sister parties in the region.

