
EU Presidency Statement on the Israeli-Palestinian relations

Press release 544/2006

27 December, 2006

The Presidency of the European Union expresses its deep concern at the news that the Israeli Government has authorised the construction of the Maskiot settlement in the West Bank. This development runs contrary to the commitment undertaken by Israel in the Roadmap. Such unilateral actions are also illegal under international law and threaten to render the two-State solution physically impossible to implement. This development would also mean the relocation of some of the Gaza settlers in the West Bank, something that the EU stated is not acceptable when it gave its support to the Gaza disengagement. The timing of the announcement is particularly unfortunate as the authorisation comes shortly after the long-sought meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Olmert and Palestinian President Abbas.

The Presidency of the EU urges the parties to refrain from all activities that would endanger the cease-fire and the hopes the meeting between Olmert and Abbas have raised. The Presidency of the EU therefore urges the Palestinian leadership to do everything in its power to stop the launching of Kassam rockets and calls on Israel to show utmost restraint. Extending the cease-fire to the West Bank must be an urgent goal.