

**Statement by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland on behalf of the Member States of the
European Union**

**Report of the Special Committee
to investigate Israeli Practices
affecting the human rights of the Palestinian People and
other Arabs of the Occupied Territories**

Fourth Committee

8 November 2005

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I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The European Union, recalling established EU positions, remains committed to the two-State solution as laid out in the Roadmap and agreed between the parties, which would result in a viable, contiguous, sovereign and independent Palestinian State existing side by side with Israel in peace and security. The EU will not recognise any change to the pre-1967 borders other than those arrived at by agreement between the parties.

The EU welcomed the successful conclusion of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank, as a significant step towards implementation of the Road Map. The EU commended Israel's armed forces and police for the smooth and professional way in which settlers were evacuated and the Palestinian Authority and people for maintaining a peaceful environment during the evacuation.

The EU welcomed disengagement as a significant step towards implementing the Roadmap. It praised the positive steps on both sides but emphasised that more remains to be done. In particular, the EU emphasised the importance, including for the growth of the Palestinian economy, of reaching an agreement on access to Gaza for people and goods through land borders, a port and airport. The EU calls for renewed action in parallel by both parties to fulfil their obligations under the Roadmap, and commitments made at Sharm el Sheikh. The EU urges contacts and co-ordination between the parties to be intensified at all levels.

The European Union condemns unreservedly the recent terrorist attacks on Israel that have resulted in a number of Israeli fatalities and injuries. The EU also condemns the further violence perpetrated by Palestinian militants. While recognising Israel's right to protect its citizens against terrorist attacks, the EU calls on Israel to act with restraint and to refrain from all extra-judicial killings, which are contrary to international law.

The European Union is gravely concerned by the continued violence in Gaza and the West Bank. The EU underlines the need for the Palestinian Authority to take full control of law and order in the Occupied Territories. The EU also stresses the importance of the Palestinian Authority taking urgent action against Palestinian militants and to dismantle terrorist capabilities and infrastructure.

The European Union acknowledges the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The European Union demands that Israel stop and reverse the construction of the separation barrier in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around Jerusalem, which is in departure of the Armistice Line of 1949 and is in contradiction to relevant provisions of International Law. It undermines Palestinians' trust in the Road Map and could prejudice final borders of a future Palestinian State.

The European Union urges the Israeli government to cease all activities in the Palestinian territories, including settlement building, the construction of the separation barrier as well as the demolition of Palestinian homes, which are contrary to international law and threaten to make any solution based on the co-existence of two states physically impossible. The EU is particularly concerned about the implementation of these policies in and around East Jerusalem. The EU calls on the Israeli government to cease all discriminatory treatment of Palestinians in East Jerusalem, especially concerning work permits, access to education and health services, building permits, house demolitions, taxation and expenditure.

The European Union underlines the importance of the forthcoming elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council as an essential element for progress in the peace process. The EU urges Israel to facilitate the preparations and conduct of the elections including in occupied East Jerusalem.

Finally, the European Union reaffirms its commitments to a just, comprehensive and lasting settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict based upon Resolutions 242 and 338, and will remain engaged with all parties to help ensure that progress toward this goal is achieved.