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150th IPU Assembly

Tashkent, Uzbekistan (5–9 April 2025)

Standing Committee on
Peace and International Security

C-I/150/M
13 January 2025

The role of parliaments in advancing a two-State solution in Palestine

Explanatory memorandum submitted by the co-Rapporteurs

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1. Introduction

The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains one of the world's longest-running and most complex disputes, with devastating consequences for peace, security and human dignity not only in the region but also beyond, and global repercussions. In view of the fact that IPU Member Parliaments twice failed to find common ground to discuss the issue of the intensification of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict following the events of 7 October 2023, the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security decided to include the issue on its agenda for the 2024-2025 work cycle.

While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has often been dealt with from a regional perspective, the Committee, following a proposal by its Bureau, agreed that its impact is also global, affecting all regions of the world, and that it should therefore be treated as a threat to international peace and security as well as to international law. It also decided to approach the issue with a forward-looking perspective, reaffirming the international commitment to a two-State solution, which has long been recognized as the most viable way to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace, and equal rights for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

Given the sensitivity of the issue and its global implications, the Committee, on a proposal from its Bureau, requested the establishment of a team of six co-rapporteurs, each representing a different region of the world, to study the issue and prepare a draft resolution for consideration at the 150th IPU Assembly in Tashkent.

Having agreed on a methodology based on desk research, the provision of individual inputs and facilitated meetings, the co-rapporteurs have succeeded in drafting the present resolution, despite several challenges, including significant time zone differences. They are grateful to the IPU Member Parliaments that provided input to the draft resolution during the debate following the expert hearing held during the 149th IPU Assembly, and later in the form of written contributions. They also thank the Forum of Young Parliamentarians for its report. All inputs have been incorporated into the draft resolution in one way or another.

2. Context

The preambular part of the resolution takes stock of the current situation and provides context. It also follows a logical progression.

- It starts by stating global principles, recalling UN and IPU resolutions as well as legal and normative principles for a resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and identifies the issues at stake, namely ongoing violence and suffering as well as the current crisis and its recent escalation.
- It highlights specific issues such as occupation and settlement activities, and the humanitarian crisis, which mostly affects vulnerable groups, particularly children, women and people with disabilities, and focuses on human suffering that justifies the need for immediate action.

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- The preamble also highlights the global impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is causing international instability and affecting international peace and security
- The preamble then presents the two-State solution as a clear path to peace based on international law and mutual recognition, and ends with a focus on the role of national and regional parliaments, setting the stage for the action-oriented operative paragraphs.

3. Proposed actions

The operative part of the resolution builds on the issues raised in the preambular paragraphs and calls for practical and action-oriented measures to advance the two-State solution. It moves from urgent action to long-term structural solutions to build momentum for comprehensive action, and addresses key stakeholders such as parliaments, the IPU, regional parliamentary bodies, and the Israeli and Palestinian Parliaments directly as the legislative institutions of the two parties to the conflict.

The operative part follows a step-by-step approach, proposing to address urgent issues, such as the need for an immediate ceasefire, before focusing on structural, more complex and long-term changes, such as elections. Similarly, the operative part begins with a focus on humanitarian assistance, fundamental rights and accountability, before moving on to the legislative role of parliaments, focusing on the two-State solution, mutual recognition, State-building and governance.

The operative part focuses on equity, inclusiveness and accountability, ensuring an inclusive approach to peacebuilding and ensuring that parliaments and regional parliamentary bodies are at the heart of the resolution of the conflict.

The approach is multi-dimensional and includes various actions, all aimed at promoting a sustainable two-State solution. The main proposed actions include:

- Parliamentary diplomacy to promote dialogue, encourage inter-parliamentary cooperation and support direct and indirect diplomacy between the Israeli and Palestinian Parliaments.
- State recognition, where parliaments are called upon to work for the universal recognition of both Israeli and Palestinian statehood, to support Palestine's accession as a full member of the United Nations, and to strengthen oversight of their governments' actions related to the conflict.
- Protection of human rights, where parliaments will be asked to use their constitutional functions to advocate for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and guarantee humanitarian access, provide financial support to humanitarian organizations, and contribute to ensuring the protection of civilians and safeguarding the rights of vulnerable populations.
- Democracy and good governance for parliaments to promote democratic governance, including through the provision of capacity-building assistance, support for inclusive peace process efforts, ensuring the participation of women and youth, and broad-based peace education, as well as financial support.

4. Conclusion

The co-rapporteurs believe they have succeeded in preparing a balanced draft resolution that focuses on the needs of the people, addresses the rights and responsibilities of both sides, and promotes peace, coexistence and shared development. The draft resolution identifies parliaments as key actors in advancing the two-State solution and gives them a practical role in implementing the resolution through an inclusive, multi-level approach to diplomacy and cooperation.

The effective implementation of the resolution will foster conditions for sustainable peace, support democratic governance in Palestine and create pathways for reconciliation between Israel and Palestine within the framework of a two-State solution.