

**STATEMENT BY THE EUROPEAN MOVEMENT ON HAMAS TERRORIST ATTACK ON ISRAEL AND THE
SEARCH FOR A STABLE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

The European Movement in Italy expresses its profound outrage at the terrorist action carried out by the Islamist paramilitary organisation Hamas, which has caused death and destruction by striking innocent victims including women and children, and expresses its full solidarity with the State and people of Israel in the defence of its security.

The taking of hostages, used as a bargaining chip or even worse as human shields, is an execrable act that is contrary to international law and the fundamental principles of civil coexistence, and all must be released immediately and unconditionally.

The European Movement in Italy expresses its greatest concern about the dramatic situation that is unfolding day by day and that risks spreading the conflict to the entire region with serious consequences for world stability.

The State of Israel has the right to act in accordance with international law to defeat the terrorist threat of Hamas because it represents a danger to the entire international community.

The fight against Hamas and its accomplices must exclude the involvement of the Palestinian population of Gaza as well as military actions directed against civilians that would make even more dramatic the situation of two million people who have been forced for years to live locked inside a territory of 360 square kilometres whose external borders are mostly controlled by the Israeli army.

The European Movement in Italy, in line with the statement by the Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres, believes that Israel's legitimate self-defence actions must therefore be carried out in full compliance with international law, avoiding indiscriminate bombardment.

The European Movement in Italy also believes that inhuman measures such as the suspension of the supply of light and water and the blocking of all basic necessities that affect the entire population of Gaza should be avoided.

The European Movement in Italy, in expressing its deep sorrow for all the innocent victims of the ongoing conflict, appeals for a ceasefire in the fighting and the reopening of the negotiating table in accordance with the UN resolutions for the creation of an autonomous Palestinian State and territorial entity while respecting the inviolability and security of the State of Israel.

Only the concrete implementation of the project of two States and two peoples living in peace and security in mutual respect can bring peace, justice and stability to the Middle East region.

To this end, the policy of settlements and occupation of the West Bank implemented by Israel, which - on the basis of United Nations Assembly and Security Council resolutions - the international community considers a territory reserved for the Palestinians living there, must cease because it cannot be considered a 'disputed territory' and trust and support must be restored to a renewed Palestinian Authority legitimised by popular vote, the only one capable of representing the people of Palestine.

The European Movement in Italy stigmatises the failure to respect and implement UN Resolutions 181 and 242 as well as the Oslo Accords that had outlined the path to a balanced solution in the region.

The European Movement in Italy emphasises how the illegal settlements of settlers in the territories pursued by Israeli governments and in particular by those led by Benjamin Netanyahu as well as an ambiguous tolerance of radical and Islamic Palestinian factions opposed to the two-state idea - which took over the Gaza Strip after the Israeli abandonment in 2005 - in order to weaken the Palestinian National Authority has had the effect of strengthening Hamas with the consequent thwarting of the two-state solution.

The European Movement in Italy - recognising itself in the statement of position adopted by the European Parliament on 19 October 2023 - urges the European Union to finally assume a role as an international actor, eschewing the ineffective method of adopting repeated declarations of principle, and to act in unity with its institutions and its Member States to promote incisive diplomatic action with the other actors playing a role in the Middle East in order to put an end to the conflict, ensure the necessary humanitarian aid to the civilian populations affected by these tragic events, also by opening the way to temporary protection for those fleeing the war, ensure the release of hostages, start negotiations - on condition that the paramilitary Hamas organisation is put in a position to do no harm - leading to a lasting peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples in compliance with international law and fundamental human rights.

In this framework, Italy could also play a leading role by relaunching the project proposed in the early 1990s of a Conference for Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean.

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