

Situation in Lebanon: statement by the Conference of Presidents

Extremely alarmed at the military escalation and the resulting humanitarian crisis in Lebanon and deeply concerned at the worsening situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Conference of Presidents of the Political Groups of the European Parliament, after their extraordinary meeting on Thursday 20 July 2006, have agreed to:

- Call for an immediate cease-fire in the region that would allow the rapid deployment of the international humanitarian aid effort and the return of international law;
- Call for the immediate opening of negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations, on the basis of the resolutions of the Security Council with the participation of the authorities of all the countries in the region.
- Express their support for sending an international stabilisation force under the supervision of the United Nations and with the participation of the European Union.
- Call for the immediate release of the kidnapped Israeli soldiers and the members of the government of the Palestinian Legislative Council imprisoned by Israel.
- Call on the European Commission to release the maximum amount of funds for humanitarian aid for the victims of the conflict in the whole region as well as the refugees in Cyprus.
- Calls on the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA) to play an active role in helping to bring about the de-escalation of the violence and a resolution to the crises.
- Calls on the European Union to speak with one voice