

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Declaration by the European Union on the Middle East

Given the extreme gravity of the situation, and over and above the individual responsibilities which have just been recalled by the Security Council in its resolution No 1322 of 7 October, the European Union considers that it is a matter of absolute priority for the parties, in the hours ahead, to take in parallel the necessary de-escalation measures and to avoid any fresh provocation.

The European Union is convinced that two peoples who must coexist have no other option than immediately to resume the negotiation path to peace, to which Israelis and Palestinians have both, in recent weeks, overcome so many obstacles hitherto considered insurmountable.

The European Union calls upon the Israeli Prime Minister to address the Palestinian people and on the President of the Palestinian Authority to address the Israeli people and to unite their efforts: in this critical period no effort must be spared to prevent fear, hatred and violence from gaining the upper hand, so that the dialogue for peace may resume as soon as possible.

The Council has asked Mr Javier SOLANA, Secretary-General, High Representative for the CFSP, to travel to the region as a matter of urgency.

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