

FORUM DES  
COLLECTIVITÉS LOCALES  
EUROPÉENNES  
POUR LA PALESTINE  
28-29 NOVEMBRE 2013  
DUNKERQUE  
+10

**Final Declaration**  
**Forum of European Local Authorities for Palestine**  
**Dunkirk +10**

We, Local Governments of Europe, Local Authorities Associations, Members of the Global network of Cities, Local and Regional Governments (UCLG), gathered in Dunkirk a decade after the first European Local Authorities Conference for the cooperation with Palestinian Territories which took place in the same city;

**recalling** the large number of decentralised cooperation projects with the Palestinian cities and initiatives for peace and dialogue in the Middle East carried out by several hundreds European local authorities;

I.

**Considering** the extensive efforts that European Local Governments have developed to coordinate their activities at European and international levels especially through the various European-Palestinian cooperation networks such as Euro-Gaza, Euro-Nablus, Euro-Ramallah and the Euro-Jericho cooperation platforms;

**Convinced** of the necessity to create a democratic sovereign and viable State of Palestine, within safe and acknowledged borders, based on international law, resting on strong democratic local institutions which will be the best warranty for Israel's security and the stability in the region;

**Having supported** the recognition of Palestine as State observer at the United Nations as well as in other agencies of this organisation, in particular the UNESCO;

**Extremely concerned** by the continued expansion of Israeli settlements in the territories where the State of Palestine should be sovereign, threatening thereby the chances of the Two States Solutions and deteriorating the living conditions of Palestinian citizens and preventing economic development of Palestinian communities;

**Concerned** by the degrading humanitarian situation in the Palestinian Territories and particularly in East Jerusalem, area C and Gaza Strip;

**Concerned** by the situation of the Palestinian refugees on which it is advisable to negotiate and agreed on a solution with both parts;

**Underlining** the important added value that European decentralised cooperation in Palestine has brought in terms of providing humanitarian assistance, defending human rights, promoting peace, local democracy, sustainable local development and institutional building;

**Commit themselves and appeal to all European Local Authorities** to promote decentralized cooperation programmes and projects with Palestinian local communities in order to develop with from bottom-up approach: a) Palestinian local democratic institutions and capacities of sustainable development; b) the building and the prosperity of a viable Palestinian state and, c) the development of Euro-Palestinian relations;

**Commit themselves** to intensify their cooperation and coordination at European level in order to increase the efficiency of their respective actions, developing in particular infra-European synergies of cooperation by multiplying thematic and geographical European-Palestinian networks;

**Urge** the European Union, the national Governments and the United Nations system to recognise the Local Governments' efficient contribution to peace, human rights and development in the region and support their efforts to develop city-to-city cooperation programmes benefitting local communities in Palestine;

**Urge** the European Union and all national governments to intensify their efforts in order to finalise the creation of a viable and sovereign State of Palestine, according to the UN Resolutions, and in peace with its neighbours;

## **II.**

**Moreover, considering** with great concern the continuing deterioration of the situation in the entire Middle East;

**Extremely concerned** about the failure, 20 year after the Oslo Peace Agreement, of all plans to build peace in the Middle East as determined by numerous United Nations resolutions;

**Considering** the major and efficient role city-to-city cooperation has played in the reconciliation between Europeans after World War 2, the achievement of a long-lasting peace in Europe, and the development of continental integration;

**Stressing** the need of more active involvement of local governments, in the different European states, in promoting the peace process from a bottom-up approach, in the form of bilateral, trilateral, multilateral partnerships and projects developed with Palestinian and local authorities and local governments in the whole Region;

**Reaffirm their conviction** that the condition for local communities in the Region to access to a long-lasting peace rests on the recognition of the United Nation "Two States

for two People” solution and of the two peoples' right to the same dignity, the same rights, and the same security;

**Commit themselves** to promote the necessary dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian Local Authorities and to intensify the efforts to develop further triangular city-to-city cooperation programmes and projects involving Palestinian, Israeli and European cities in order to increase dialogue, mutual understanding and common projects between the three communities;

**Commit themselves** to continue the work for peace and dialogue by actively taking part in the organization of :

- The Second conference on city-to-city cooperation in the Middle East to be held in Jena (Germany) in June 2014;
- The next European Local Authorities Conference for Peace in the Middle East, to be held in Palermo (Italy), in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea, in 2015.

**Welcome** the decision of the European Network Local Authorities for Peace in the Middle East to consolidate its work by providing the Network with a legal personality and establishing a Secretariat open to the participation and the contribution of all interested European Local Governments;

**Launch** a new strong appeal to the United Nations, the European Union and the Member States to act with renewed determination, creativity and effectiveness to build peace in the Middle East beginning with the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict;

**Invite all Cities and Local Governments** to play an active role for Peace in the Middle East through the development of city-to-city cooperation projects and programmes and City Diplomacy.

*“I remain convinced that local governments, alongside the international community, the European Union, and countries in the Region, have the duty to promote dialogue. This is the only solution for a sustainable peace. Therefore we, local governments, will keep on bringing a relentless support to the establishment of long-lasting peace process through dialogue between the two peoples. The day will come, I am convinced, when we will all together carry out, in the Middle East, development projects in favour of peace and in the interest of all.” Michel Delebarre*

Dunkirk, France, 29th November 2013