



URGENT

PWG NOTE – EUROPEAN RESPONSE TO THE NEW ISRAELI GOVERNMENT

The sixth Netanyahu government sworn in on December 28, 2022, represents more than a routine transfer of power in a normal parliamentary democracy; its ultimate intention is - to effect a regime change, enabling the completion of the West Bank annexation.

The situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) continues to deteriorate, with 2022 having been the year with the most Palestinian fatalities since the second intifada. We are witnessing escalating oppression of the Palestinians, violations of their human rights, and measures taken to solidify Israel's grip on the OPT along with the unprecedented onslaught of the 37th Israeli Government against all norms of civilized society at home, creating a tragic state of affairs in front of our eyes.

True to the nature of the extreme, ultra-right, fundamentalist coalition assembled by Netanyahu, the newly adopted government platform openly promotes sovereign rights of self-determination exclusively for the Jewish people on the entire landmass between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. The steps that will allow the translation of this outlook into policy are anchored in the coalition agreements that provide for the transfer of responsibility over the OPT from the military to civilian authority.

The fiction of a "temporary" occupation is over, as well as the lip service paid to the "peace process." The international community's faith in Israel's desire for peace based on recognition of the Palestinian people's rights is insupportable in the face of the Israeli Government's declaration of its intention to remain in the OPT forever – not because "there is no partner" and not because of security needs but because it is seen as a God-ordained imperative.

It is incumbent on Europe to recognize this new reality and take immediate action to make it clear to the Israeli Government that its ongoing oppression of the Palestinians will come at a cost and that the success of its efforts to quash democracy at home could turn it into a pariah state. Europe must affirm its expectation that the fundamental values that are the bedrock of international relations -- equality, the rule of law, and the sanctity of human rights -- will find expression in the Israeli Government's conduct on both sides of the Green Line.

The situation calls for the reiteration of European recognition of the equal right to self-determination of both parties in the Holy land and the reaffirmation of UN Security Council Resolution 2334 as the primary basis for any future peace negotiations.

In light of Israel's declared intention to retain its hold on the OPT, the leading European countries should reassess their position on the request to the ICJ for a legal opinion on the occupation and its consequences and should support both this endeavor as well as the decision of the ICC to investigate whether the parties to the conflict have committed war crimes since 2014.

We call upon Europe to prioritize assertive engagement with the parties through both diplomatic and public channels to contain and ultimately reverse the downward spiral based on the understanding that instability in our region threatens the welfare not only of the direct parties to the conflict but that of the neighboring Arab countries as well as the strategic European interests in the region.

Until such time as an agreement between the parties is secured, we urge Europe to defend its values in the region by monitoring human rights violations by either side and vigorously reacting to them without delay.

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Ms. Jessica Montell * MK Mossi Raz * Dr. Nura Resh * Mr. Hillel Schenker * Prof. Itzhak Schnell * Prof. Dmitry Shumsky

"We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians." (Nelson Mandela, 1997)

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