Country: Greece

Committee: Israel- Palestine Conflict

Subject: Where does the Israel-Palestine confict come from and where is it going? How can we solve this problem? What steps we will and we should take?

Israel is the world’s only Jewish state, located just east of the Mediterranean Sea. Palestinians, the Arab population that hails from the land Israel now controls, refer to the territory as Palestine, and want to establish a state by that name on all or part of the same land. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is over who gets what land and how it’s controlled. Settlements are communities of Jews that have been moving to the West Bank since it came under Israeli occupation in 1967. Some of the settlers move there for religious reasons, some because they want to claim the West Bank territory as Israeli land, and some because the housing there tends to be cheap and subsidized. Settlements are generally considered to be a major impediment to peace. Though both Jews and Arab Muslims date their claims to the land back a couple thousand years, the current political conflict began in the early 20th century. Jews fleeing persecution in Europe wanted to establish a national homeland in what was then an Arab- and Muslim-majority territory in the Ottoman and later British Empire. The Arabs resisted, seeing the land as rightfully theirs. An early United Nations plan to give each group part of the land failed, and Israel and the surrounding Arab nations fought several wars over the territory. Today’s lines largely reflect the outcomes of two of these wars, one waged in 1948 and another in 1967. The 1967 war is particularly important for today’s conflict, as it left Israel in control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, two territories home to large Palestinian populations. Today, the West Bank is nominally controlled by the Palestinian Authority and is under Israeli occupation. This comes in the form of Israeli troops, who enforce Israeli security restrictions on Palestinian movement and activities, and Israeli “settlers,” Jews who build ever-expanding communities in the West Bank that effectively deny the land to Palestinians. Gaza is controlled by Hamas, an Islamist fundamentalist party, and is under Israeli blockade but not ground troop occupation.

Today, there are two main solutions for this conflict. First one is the “two-state solution”, it would create an independent Israel and Palestine, and is the mainstream approach to resolving the conflict. The idea is that Israelis and Palestinians want to run their countries differently; Israelis want a Jewish state, and Palestinians want a Palestinian one. Because neither side can get what it wants in a joined state, the only possible solution that satisfies everyone involves separating Palestinians and Israelis. Second one is the “one-state solution” which would merge Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip into one big country. It comes in two versions. One, favored by some leftists and Palestinians, would create a single democratic country. Arab Muslims would outnumber Jews, thus ending Israel as a Jewish state. The other version, favored by some rightists and Israelis, would involve Israel annexing the West Bank and either forcing out Palestinians or denying them the right to vote. Virtually the entire world, including most Zionists (Zionism is an ideological movement of ideas based on Jewish nationalism that supports and defends the re-establishment of a Jewish state after centuries in the lands defined as the historical Land of Israel), rejects this option as an unacceptable human rights violation.

As the delegation of Greece, we are committed to the official positions of the European Union. For example, we supported the two-state solution along the1967 borders and we opposed to unilateral Israeli measures such as settlement construction and annexation. But also, we pronounce that the Israel-Palestine conflict never has and will never affect our political or economical relationships with the two mentioned country except in cases of emergency and European Union decisions. For example, we do not plan to end the $1.6 billion defense agreement with Israel.

We also announce that we are interested in this problem and next to the European Union, we will be a side on the discussion of this conflict as the representative of Greece. As the delegate of Greece, we still agree with the two-state solution which seems to be the most peaceful way to end these problems. We can easily declare that we are always on the side of the peace and the oppressed.