

YEPP Joint Statement on the conflict between Israel and Hamas Council Meeting in Skopje (18.11.2023)

On October 7, 2023, the international community witnessed a shocking and unprecedented attack targeting Israel, orchestrated by the terrorist organisation, Hamas. This meticulously planned assault involved the launching of thousands of rockets and the infiltration of terrorists into Israeli territory with the sole aim of attacking Israeli civilians.

This reprehensible act resulted in a devastating toll, with over 1,400 lives lost and more than 3,400 people injured. Additionally, more than 230 individuals were taken hostage in Gaza, and many others were reported as missing. The ensuing conflict between Israel and Hamas led to significant casualties on both sides and widespread destruction in Gaza.

The Youth of the European People's Party (YEPP) unites in solidarity to denounce these heinous acts and express our collective commitment to a world that prioritises peace, security, and the sanctity of human life.

YEPP expresses heartfelt condolences and unwavering solidarity with the Israeli people and all innocent civilians in Gaza affected by the conflict, emphasising the importance of directly addressing these sentiments to the relevant authorities.

YEPP stands for:

1. **Unwavering Support for Israel:** YEPP unequivocally stands in solidarity with Israel by supporting its inherent right to self-defence and its efforts to bring an end to the threat posed by Hamas.
2. **Condemnation of Terrorism:** In light of the despicable terrorist attack of October 7th, 2023, and the continued crimes committed by Hamas against defenceless civilians, YEPP calls for the strongest condemnation of these terrorist acts.
3. **Hostage Release:** YEPP demands the immediate release of all hostages held in Gaza and for the European Council, European Commission, and Member States to double down on their efforts to secure the release of all hostages, recognizing the urgency and gravity of the situation.
4. **Protecting Jewish communities:** YEPP strongly condemns all forms of antisemitism and urges European States to protect European Jewish communities and Jewish lives. It calls on member states to penalise antisemitic acts, exceeding the freedom of speech and to expel any third country nationals who express support for Hamas or any terrorist activities.
5. **Respect for international law:** YEPP calls for continuous efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region as well as protecting innocent civilian lives and urges the international community to abide by international humanitarian law.

6. **Humanitarian aid:** Emphasising the importance of humanitarian aid reaching those in need while ensuring that it does not inadvertently support terrorist leaders or activities and urging EU member states to take concerted actions to prevent the flow of funding or international aid from reaching Hamas and other terrorist organisations.
7. **Humanitarian corridors:** YEPP urges Egypt and Israel to work with the international community to establish humanitarian corridors to the Gaza-strip.
8. **Diplomatic approach and a two-state solution:** YEPP calls for continuous diplomatic efforts to address the Israel-Palestine conflict, encompassing diplomatic initiatives, like the Abraham Accords, and advocating a clear vision for a peaceful future in the region. Further, we call on all parties to resume their efforts to work towards a two-state solution.