

Israel- Hamas in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party, convening in Estoril, Portugal on October 4-6, 2024:

Notes with concern:

- The escalating risk of a region-wide war related to the increased tension between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, amidst the recent Israeli ground incursion, as well as increased violence in the West Bank;
- Since Hezbollah's initial rocket fire on 8 October 2023, months of exchanges between both parties have seen tens of thousands displaced and hundreds killed;
- The ongoing humanitarian devastation in Gaza, where now many thousands of Palestinians are estimated to have been killed, vast numbers have life changing injuries and the destruction of homes, schools and medical facilities will take many years to restore;
- A year on from the brutal 7 October Hamas terrorist attacks, which killed over 1,100, many survivors are traumatised, including by the use of sexual violence, and over 100 hostages still held by Hamas;
- The role of Iran, which continues to destabilise the region via its Revolutionary Guards, supply of arms to its proxy terrorist groups Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis, and its military threats against Israel.
- The recent direct attack by Iran on Israel, launching approximately 180 ballistic missiles, marking a severe escalation in the long-standing conflict between the two nations and potentially pushing the region further into instability.
- Acknowledging Israel's right to self-defense, it's crucial to recognise the heavy toll on civilians in Palestinian territories, Lebanon and Israel, emphasizing the paramount importance of protecting human rights and adhering to international humanitarian law to shield non-combatants from violence.

Believes that:

- Only a political and diplomatic solution will deliver security and peace to the region, with those displaced able to return home;
- A two-state solution is the only way to deliver the dignity and security which Palestinians and Israelis deserve.

Calls for:

- Immediate bilateral ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, and a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon;
- The immediate unconditional release of all hostages held in Gaza;
- Unhindered access for humanitarian aid and essential supplies to Gaza;
- Increased humanitarian support to Lebanon;
- European Governments and the EU to work to secure a two-state solution for the region, based on 1967 borders;
- European governments and the EU to use their influence with all involved parties to de-escalate and to uphold international law, which makes clear that civilians must be protected;
- The proscribing of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation.
- All countries in the region and worldwide to recognise Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state within secure and internationally recognised borders, as a fundamental step towards lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.