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Strong Plaid backing for Palestinian statehood

A press release by EFA MEP Jill Evans

Plaid MEP Jill Evans has called on the European Union member states to support international recognition of an independent Palestinian state

The Plaid Cymru President and MEP spoke in today's European Parliament debate on the situation in the Middle East, in the presence of Baroness Ashton, the EU's High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy. Ms Evans backed Palestine's bid for full UN membership as an independent state, arguing that it could be a means of stopping illegal Israeli settlement building on Palestinian land. This would be a way of helping the resumption of peace talks towards a lasting two-state solution.

Ms Evans has visited Palestine and Israel many times and is a long standing campaigner for peace in the Middle East.

Jill Evans MEP said:

"As the United Nations considers Palestine's application for full state membership, I would join the many others across Europe and beyond in urging the EU member states to support the Palestinian request.

"Talks so far have failed. Of course, peace can only be achieved through negotiation. The recognition of the State of Palestine could lead to a freeze on the building of settlements in the West Bank and an end to the occupation - the way to ensure that further talks take place and that a two state solution will still be possible.

"The Palestinians have the right to be recognised as a state and that means they would have full rights to participate in all international agreements and treaties.

"However, Amnesty International has raised concerns that the EU is promoting a compromise which would prevent recourse to the International Criminal Court. This would undermine both the ICC's credibility and the principle of equal access to justice and reparation for all people. I hope that this is not the case and I would like to ask Baroness Ashton for her response."

The Palestinian leadership has submitted its bid for full UN recognition, whilst the US administration has indicated its readiness to veto Palestine's application. The approach of the European Union is crucial in taking forward Palestine's bid for statehood, and for building a lasting and sustainable peace based on a two-state solution. Jill Evans got the full backing of Plaid Cymru's recent annual conference for UK and

EU recognition of the Palestinian state.

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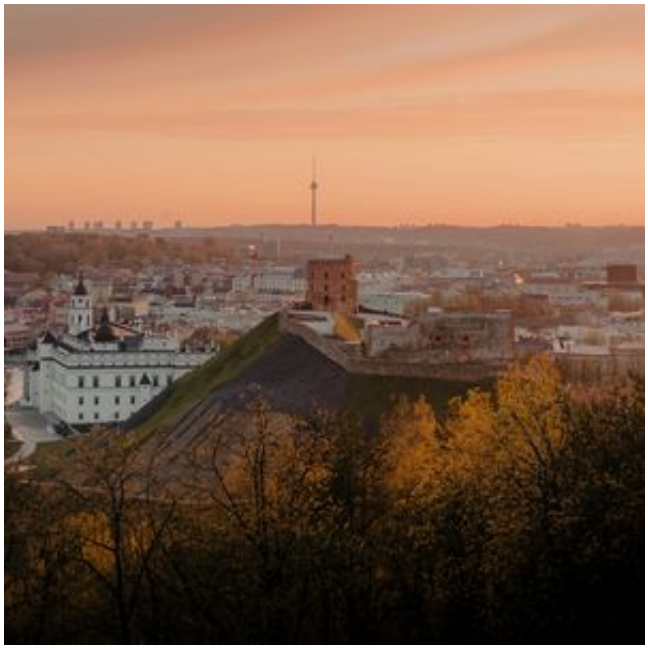
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