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**Efforts to Overcome the Status quo:  
An Appeal to Western Diplomacy**

**by Judith & Reiner Bernstein, Ulrich Kusche  
and Tilman Spengler**

After the 72 hour ceasefire agreement of August 05 for the Gaza Strip and southern Israel nobody entertains the illusion that a breakthrough has been achieved for the resumption of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians for a final status solution:

The government in Jerusalem has reserved all options including further military operations. The Palestinian Authority and the representatives of " Hamas " are deeply disconnected by political and ideological differences. Furthermore, they will be watchful to prevent the implementation of Avigdor Lieberman's idea to extract the coastal strip from a future negotiating mandate and to place it under a UN trusteeship of whatever form and structure.

Although Israeli politics have obstructed for a long time the conclusion of a peace treaty with a two-state regulation as an historic opportunity, the State of Israel has the inalienable right to national existence and security within the borders between 1949 and 1967.

However, this right does not include the continuation of the occupation of territories in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which are internationally destined for the formation of the state of Palestine, as well as the continuation of the blockade of Gaza. The solution of the Golan Heights question will have to be negotiated with a future government of Syria.

The efforts of German, European and American diplomacy failed due to the intransigence of especially Israeli governments, even though they have been claiming for a long time to be a partner in the pursuit for peace. By primarily focussing on short term crisis management to combat regular outbreaks of violence, rather than addressing the long term and sustainable conflict resolution, the Western capitals became suspected to be degraded to an agent of the Israeli politics.

Even though we realize that the German Federal Government's room to manoeuvre is limited by international treaties and other obligations, we as German citizens are convinced that the operational capacity of influence on the conflicting parties is not yet exhausted, Therefore, we appeal to the Federal Government to consider our recommendations as part of its approach "Review 2014 – Foreign Policy to Develop":

1. In future the consultations between the German and the Israeli governments the settlement project and the procedures of interventions should be addressed more than before, because they a detrimental to the establishment of a viable State of Palestine.
2. The status of the Palestinian representation in Berlin should be upgraded to the Embassy of Palestine with all diplomatic privileges. Thus, the limited authority of the "German Palestine Steering Committee" is overcome.
3. As a future participant of the political process "Hamas" is obliged to the unambiguous recognition of Israel within the borders between 1949 and 1967.
4. In case of serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights conventions the Israeli and the Palestinian

ambassador should be summoned immediately to the Foreign Office in Berlin.

5. The Federal Government should critically and continuously accompany the implementation of the EU Directive "Horizon 2020".
6. As long as there is no peace treaty with the establishment of two states and as long as there continues to be a serious existential threat from the Arab neighbourhood, the Federal Government is in our view obliged to continue military aid to and cooperation with Israel, but limited to realistic levels of the Israeli necessities of self-defence.
7. The German authorities may regularly check the travel documents of Israeli citizens entering Germany to see whether their place of residence or their centre of life is in the occupied Palestinian territories, and draw the necessary legal conclusions.
8. The Government of Egypt is required to open on a permanent basis the border crossings from Gaza into the Sinai Peninsula in accordance with the international rules for passenger traffic as well as goods and services.
9. The Federal Government should declare its willingness to participate in measures to stop illegal arms shipments from the Mediterranean to the Gaza Strip and to guarantee the unimpeded commercial fishing within the international 12 mile zone off the coast of the Gaza Strip.

We are joining the conviction of Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn that the Palestinians also need to have a sovereign state for the very reason that Israel cannot live in peace without one. Therefore we urge the German Federal Government to assign its

political attention more than ever to the Israeli and Palestinian peace forces and to support them in every practical way.

Authors:

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