



## Fresh viewpoints on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

**Building confidence and trust among future leaders is crucial to ending the Israeli Palestinian conflict, concluded a meeting of young European, Israeli and Palestinian political leaders who worked together at the European Parliament from 25 to 28 May. This event on the relationships between identities and politics was hosted by EP President Hans-Gert Pöttering.**

"The involvement of young political leaders is crucial for the transformation of present conflicts into future peace. This platform has enabled young leaders from both sides to exchange views and real life experiences, building the foundation for trust between future generations", says a joint message (**now available below**) delivered to President Pöttering.

"Building confidence and trust for future political leaders is essential", said the EP President, who wants to continue this dialogue between the three parties.

"This could lead to a more fruitful outcome if we lead in the future", said Hussam Jubran for the Palestinian side. Israeli delegate Roy Shaposhnik, from Kadima, underlined that issues normally not raised have been discussed, such as options for Jerusalem. Jochem De Groot, European delegate pointed out the "immense amount of respect between parties".

As part of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, this meeting enabled young political leaders to exchange political and individual experiences and establish interpersonal relationships in a neutral environment.

Several MEPs took part in the event, to discuss issues such as constructing identities and politicised regional identities in the EU, with examples from the Basque country, with Carlos Iturgaiz Angulo (EPP-ED), Belgium, with Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroek (ALDE), and Northern Ireland, with Bairbre de Brún (GUE/NGL).

Michael Gahler (EPP-ED, DE) led a debate on "From hereditary enemies to pooled sovereignty - the EU integration experience as a model?" Workshops were held on "Creative solutions for Jerusalem" and on "Identity and sovereignty - the question of Jerusalem", led by David Hammerstein Mintz (Greens/EFA, ES).

President Pöttering organised the event using the €20 000 he received as winner of the Hallstein Prize, which he received in Frankfurt on 5 November 2007. The prize recognises work for European integration and is awarded by the City of Frankfurt, the Johann Wolfgang Goethe-University and Dresdner Bank.

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