
European Parliament President Metsola visits Israel, Gaza and West Bank

During her official visit to Israel and the occupied Palestinian Territories, EP President Metsola was the first European leader to enter Gaza in more than a decade.

President Metsola is on an official visit to Israel and the Palestinian occupied territory this Thursday and Friday, where she is holding talks with the political authorities.

“At this critical moment for the region and the world, I wanted to come here to underline and witness first hand Europe’s critical role in getting humanitarian aid into Gaza. Europe is ready to step up our engagement and do what we can to help the ceasefire-hostages release deal to hold, to provide a path to increased aid and a building block to a sustainable peace”, said President Metsola.

During her visit, the President is underlining Europe’s willingness:

- to engage constructively with all partners in the region,
- to ensure the current ceasefire and hostage deal holds,
- and to provide a path to a sustainable peace in the region that can ensure security for Israel and a real perspective to the Palestinian people.

Programme of the visit

On Thursday, the President met with the Speaker of the Knesset, Amir Ohana and the Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Sa’ar in Jerusalem. She also travelled to the Kerem Shalom Border Crossing Point to visit the humanitarian operations.

From there, President Metsola entered into Gaza, the first European leader to do so in more than a decade, where she was able to witness humanitarian aid entering from the Israeli side. She was also able to highlight the EU’s critical role in supporting humanitarian efforts in Gaza (notably through the EUBAM operation) and the EU’s commitment towards the ceasefire and hostage exchange deal.

Following her return into Israel, President Metsola was briefed by the European Union Border Assistance Mission for the Rafah Crossing ([EUBAM Rafah](#)) on their mission and ongoing efforts to support humanitarian aid in Gaza.

She also visited the Site of the Nova Festival in Re'im, and later today, she will be holding talks with the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog.

On Friday, the President will be in Ramallah to meet with Palestinian leadership. She will meet with Mr. Hussein al-Sheikh, Secretary-General of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and with the 2024 Sakharov Prize Nominee, Ms. Reem Al Hajajra, Director of Women of the Sun.

Background

In recent weeks, EP President Roberta Metsola focused on promoting stability and peace in the Middle East. She has had several meetings and telephone conversations with leaders from Israel, Palestine, the Arab countries and US representatives. She has held talks in Cairo with Egyptian President, met with King Abdullah II of Jordan, received the Palestinian Prime Minister in Brussels and spoke to the Israeli Foreign Minister as well as the Speaker of the US House of Representatives.

The visit comes after heightened engagement by the President in supporting the ceasefire-hostage deal in Gaza and pushing for an increase in humanitarian efforts.

In a [resolution](#) adopted on 18 January 2024, the European Parliament became the first European institution to formally call for the immediate release of all hostages, the dismantling of the terrorist organisation Hamas, the resumption of the two-state solution and the relaunch of the peace process.

Further information

[EP Multimedia Centre: official visit by Roberta Metsola, EP President, to Israel and occupied Palestinian territories](#)

[EP Multimedia Centre: situation in Israel and Gaza](#)

Contacts

Jüri LAAS

Spokesperson of the President

☎ (+32) 2 28 44090 (BXL)

📱 (+32) 470 95 75 61

✉ juri.laas@europarl.europa.eu
