



## **Official Statement of the Federal Republic of Germany**

regarding the Situation in the Middle East

**Thursday, March 3, 2011**

Since decades conflicts and war are overshadowing the lives of millions of people in the middle east. While political initiatives had been launched over and over again, the world community has not been able to propose a comprehensive peace agreement yet. Today a continuation of the current impasse is not any longer an option. Inspired by the heroic fight for freedom in North Africa the people in the middle east must find a common framework for peace, while the international community has to do everything possible to support them.

The Federal Republic of Germany and Israel are and will always be connected in a unique way by our common memory of the Holocaust. Therefore we as a nation consider stability, security and peace in the middle east of outstanding importance. So the ultimate goal must be clear; we need a sovereign, viable and democratic Palestinian State living peacefully side by side with a secure and generally acknowledged Israel. Yet even the road there seems to be clear; borders must, with some territorial swaps, be based on the 1967 lines, Jerusalem has to be the future capital of two States, a fair but also realistic solution for the refugee question has to be found and every form of terrorism must not only be condemned, but also fought by all involved parties.

Now that we know where to go and how to get there, we must bring up the will to do the necessary steps. We strongly urge both parties to start direct negotiations again, with the goal of achieving first agreements within a year. In order to create the proper environment for such talks, the continuation of settlement activity in the occupied Palestinian territories has to be stopped, and radical Palestinians must refrain from terrorism and violence. This requires the full support of the international community, especially of the Middle East Quartet, as well as the active backing of the Arab States.

The Federal Republic will be, as it has been a loyal and reliable partner to its allies. Germany is and will continue to be a unrelenting supporter of peace and stability, we will do our share in order to bring the ongoing conflicts to an end and we ask all other nations to do the same.