



## Toespraak

## Toespraak van de Voorzitter van de Eerste Kamer, mw. A. Broekers-Knol, ter gelegenheid van de ontvangst van President Abbas van de Palestijnse Gebieden

29 oktober 2015

*datum 28 oktober 2015*

Mr. President,

On behalf of the States General of the Netherlands, and on behalf of my colleague, the President of the House of Representatives Ms. Anouchka van Miltenburg, please let me say: welcome.

I am very pleased to meet you and to receive you at the Senate of the Netherlands again after your last visit 4,5 years ago.

You are the leading figure of the Palestinian resistance and have fought endlessly for the Palestinian people. Therefore I am honoured to receive you here today.

The objective of your visit is to participate in the second edition of the bilateral forum that was founded in 2012 between the Netherlands and the Palestinian Territories.

In 2012 several partnership agreements between Dutch and Palestinian knowledge institutions, government authorities and businesses were signed.

I wish you and your delegation fruitful meetings, and of course a successful outcome of this second bilateral forum.

Partnership agreements with the Netherlands and, of course, other countries are vital when it comes to strengthening the Palestinian economy.

A stronger economy will foster a more resilient Palestinian society, and more prosperity for the people of the Palestinian Territories.

At the same time we realise the road ahead is not simple, nor is it easy. We are aware of the fact that the peace process remains very complex.

Recently there has been a strong surge in violence in the Palestinian Territories and in Israel. And it is with infinite sadness that we hear of the terrible acts of violence which happen on a daily basis.

We fully realise that for you, the resistance and struggle, and the road to dignity and freedom, keep requiring your unrelenting efforts, vigilance and courageous stance.



datum 20 oktober 2015

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Simultaneously, the world around us - and more specifically around you in the Middle East - has changed dramatically, and is still changing rapidly.

After the hopeful start of the Arab Spring, threats to stability have increased significantly in the Middle East, and consequently in Europe.

This has resulted in a global shift of focus from solely the Middle East peace process between the Palestinian Territories and Israel, to the broader region in the Middle East.

All in all, the situation in the Palestinian Territories and in the broader region, not only calls for unity amongst the Palestinian authorities and within Palestinian society, but also for the need of some sort of *modus vivendi* between the Palestinian Territories and Israel.

I therefore hope the contacts that are made and the partnerships that are closed during the bilateral forum will help to further strengthen the foundations of the Palestinian economy and Palestinian society in general, so that both the Palestinian people and the region can benefit from it.

Mr. President,

Once again, it is an honour to receive you here today. I wish you a very pleasant visit.

And may I give the floor to you.