

EuropeAid

Commission approves first package of €224.5 million in support to the palestinian people in 2010.

The European Commission decided today to provide an initial financial package worth €224.5 million for the Occupied Palestinian Territory under the 2010 budget.

In announcing the package Commissioner Ferrero Waldner said:

"By today's decision the Commission wants to give a signal to the Palestinian people that they can count on our continued support in 2010 as in the past. Our support will be channelled through PEGASE. The Union trusts that Member States and other donors will continue supporting the Palestinian people through this mechanism."

Today's decision, by which the EC fulfils the pledges made at the Paris Donors' Conference in December 2007, will help the Palestinian Authority to continue providing essential public services across the territory. Of today's announced package, including a contribution of €0.5 million from Austria destined for payments to vulnerable Palestinian families and which will be managed by the Commission, €158.5 million will be channelled through the EU's assistance mechanism for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, PEGASE¹, which was launched in February 2008. These funds will help the PA to cover wages and pensions for essential civilian workers (particularly medical and teaching staff) and allocations to vulnerable Palestinian families.

So far the Commission has already provided €459 million in direct financial support to the Palestinian Authority through this mechanism, with EU Member States contributing a further €186 million.

The remaining €66 million will be allocated to the core budget of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. UNRWA provides basic health, education and social safety net services for a refugee population of 4.67 million people since 1949. The EU and its Member States are the biggest donors to UNRWA.

¹ PEGASE: mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique

Background

Aid to the Palestinian Authority is provided to support the implementation of the Palestinian Reform and Development Plan (PRDP), presented by the PA at the donor conference in December 2007, held in Paris. Despite having made progress, the economic and social trends in the occupied Palestinian territory have deteriorated, largely due to the failure on the part of Israel to lift access and movement restrictions. This first tranche of financing for 2010 responds to the priorities of the PA in supporting recurrent expenditure and the needs of UNRWA to support Palestinian refugees.

Further information on EU-OPT relations:

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/occupied_palestinian_territory/occupied-palestinian-territory_en.htm



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