

## Commission approves additional amount of € 61.4 million in support for the Palestinian people in 2010

The European Commission has today decided to provide an additional financial package worth € 61.4 million for the Occupied Palestinian Territory under the 2010 budget. This comes in addition to the € 295 already approved from ENPI.

In announcing the package Commissioner Stefan Füle said:

*"By today's decision the Commission wants to give a signal to the Palestinian people that they can count on our continued support. The money will be used to pay the salaries of those Palestinian Authority employees providing vital services to the people as well as to allow UNRWA to provide similar services to the refugee population. We hope, as in the past, that Member States and other donors will continue supporting the Palestinian people both through the PEGASE mechanism and through financial help for UNRWA."*

Some €41.4 million of the funds from today's decision will go towards helping the PA meet its salary obligations for teachers, doctors and nurses in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This is in response to a plea to the EU by Prime Minister Fayyad. The funds will be channelled through the EU's assistance mechanism for the occupied Palestinian territory, PEGASE<sup>1</sup>, which was launched in February 2008.

€20 million will be provided to UNRWA's General Fund to allow it to continue to meet its obligations to provide health, education and social protection services to the Palestinian refugee population.

So far the Commission has already provided €692 million in support to the Palestinian Authority through this mechanism, with EU Member States contributing a further €255 million.

### 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

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<sup>1</sup> PEGASE: mécanisme Palestino-Européen de Gestion de l'Aide Socio-Economique

trends in the occupied Palestinian territory have deteriorated, largely due to the continuing blockage of exports from f Gaza where the blockade has been only partially lifted as well as a limited implementation on the part of Israel of its commitment to lift access and movement restrictions in the West Bank.

Further information on EU-OPT relations:

[http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/occupied\\_palestinian\\_territory/occupied-palestinian-territory\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/occupied_palestinian_territory/occupied-palestinian-territory_en.htm)

For more information please contact:

Michael Docherty

EuropeAid Office

Phone: (+32 2) 295 78 51

Fax: (+32 2) 296 53 36

Email: [Michael.Docherty@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Michael.Docherty@ec.europa.eu)

Website of the delegation: <http://ec.europa.eu/delegations/westbank>



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