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E-001862/2024

Answer given by Ms Šuica
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.3.2025)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) provides essential services to millions of people in Gaza, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and across the region, including Lebanon, Syria and Jordan¹.

The EU has underlined the importance of countering the disinformation campaign targeting UNRWA² and is closely monitoring and documenting this multi-layered disinformation campaign within its mandate 'to counter and expose disinformation in countries neighbouring the Union' outlined in the 2018 Action Plan on Disinformation³.

From 2021 to 2024, the EU contribution to UNRWA's programme budget amounted to EUR 363 million. This funding aims to contribute to maintaining basic living conditions and access to essential services such as health, education and social services for Palestine refugees, salaries for teachers, doctors and social workers operating in refugee camps, but also reinforcing UNRWA's systems to ensure neutrality or countering disinformation. Following the fulfilment by UNRWA of all the conditions agreed for the 2024 EU funding, the Commission disbursed in three tranches a total of EUR 82 million, and an additional top-up of EUR 10 million in December 2024⁴. This came in addition to the EUR 48.5 million of EU humanitarian funding in 2024.

The EU is committed to continuing its support to the Agency, whilst also to closely monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Review Group report⁵ following the allegations against some UNRWA staff. The EU looks forward to further decisive action by the UN to ensure neutrality, accountability and strengthen control and oversight in order to prevent further cases. It is essential that UNRWA can continue carrying out its crucial work in line with its mandate based on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 302(IV) adopted on 8 December 1949 and renewed since.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/qa3lblga/euco-conclusions-27062024-en.pdf>

² https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/middle-east-five-principles-eu-peace-making_en

³ https://commission.europa.eu/publications/action-plan-disinformation-commission-contribution-european-council-13-14-december-2018_en

⁴ https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-disburses-additional-eu10-million-payment-unrwa-2024-12-20_en

⁵ <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/report-independent-review-group-on-unrwa-22april2024/>