

EN  
E-002052/2024  
Answer given by Ms Šuica  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(30.1.2025)

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has been providing life-saving services in Gaza and across the region in line with the mandate adopted by the UN General Assembly<sup>1</sup>. The European Council reaffirmed repeatedly that these services were essential<sup>2</sup>.

Following the very serious allegations against several UNRWA staff regarding their possible involvement in the 7 October 2023 terrorist attacks, the Commission reviewed its funding decision for UNRWA. The Commission has engaged with UNRWA's Commissioner General and welcomed his commitment to tackle the serious issues at stake, including through the adoption of an Action Plan to implement the recommendations of the Independent Review Group (IRG)<sup>3</sup>, and the swift follow up on the UN Office of Internal Oversight Service report on the allegations against UNRWA's staff<sup>4</sup>. Upon fulfilment by UNRWA of the conditions agreed for the 2024 EU funding, the Commission disbursed in three tranches a total of EUR 82 million, the last of which in October 2024. Additionally, a top-up of EUR 10 million was disbursed on 20 December 2024, following progress by the Agency on the implementation of the recommendations of the IRG and of the EU system Audit.

In accordance with the Financial Regulation<sup>5</sup>, all relevant agreements concluded with recipients of EU funds include tools to ensure the sound financial management of the EU budget. Entities implementing EU funds also need to comply with EU restrictive measures<sup>6</sup>. Furthermore, as a follow up of the review of funding to Palestine<sup>7</sup>, some of safeguards have been further reinforced<sup>8</sup>.

There is no role for the EU Agency for asylum - which assists Member States in applying laws related to asylum, international protection and reception conditions - in providing support to refugees from Palestine.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unrwa.org/content/general-assembly-resolution-302>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/70880/euco-conclusions-2122032024.pdf>,  
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/2pebccz2/20241017-euco-conclusions-en.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/colonna-report-and-action-plan>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/unrwa-investigation-statement-05aug24/>

<sup>5</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast), OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024.

<sup>6</sup> Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

<sup>7</sup> This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

<sup>8</sup> <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/Communication%20to%20the%20Commission%20on%20the%20review%20of%20ongoing%20financial%20assistance%20for%20Palestine.pdf>