

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000887/26
to the Commission
Hildegard Bentele (PPE)
(4 March 2026)

Subject: ‘Pay for slay’, Palestinian Authority constitutional reforms and risks for EU financial assistance

Recent reporting, as well as official Israeli sources, indicates that, despite announcements that the Palestinian Authority has ended the so-called Martyrs’ Fund, prisoner stipends commonly referred to as ‘pay for slay’ may continue through alternative welfare structures. At the same time, media reports on a draft Palestinian constitution presented to President Mahmoud Abbas suggest that future governance arrangements could institutionalise provisions relating to prisoners and ‘martyrs’, raising concerns about the long-term entrenchment of such payments.

In this context, the Commission is asked:

1. What assessment has it made of whether ‘pay for slay’ type payments or successor schemes remain operational within the Palestinian Authority, including through renamed social-welfare channels?
2. Given the risk of budgetary fungibility, what concrete safeguards, audits and monitoring mechanisms does the Commission apply to ensure that EU financial assistance cannot be used, directly or indirectly, to finance such payments?
3. In the light of reported constitutional reforms, does the Commission intend to introduce clear conditionality, suspension clauses or repayment mechanisms for EU budgetary support if ‘pay for slay’ provisions were maintained or embedded in a future Palestinian constitutional framework?

Submitted: 4.3.2026

Answer given by Ms Šuica on behalf of the European Commission
(5 May 2026)

By adopting, in 2025, Presidential decree 4/2025 ⁽¹⁾ abolishing the so-called ‘prisoners and martyrs’ payment’, the Palestinian Authority (PA) confirmed its commitment to its reform agenda, moving towards establishing a new social protection system based exclusively on need and vulnerability criteria.

The PA has commissioned an independent audit — which is currently ongoing — to confirm that cash transfer payments are allocated based on socioeconomic criteria.

The Commission has always excluded financial support to the prisoners and martyrs’ payment system in its financial support to the PA.

All EU contributions to the PA under the Palestinian-European Socio-Economic Management and Assistance Mechanism (PEGASE) — including those targeting social welfare cash transfers — go through high standards of control applied through *ex ante* and *ex post* verifications. These verifications have been evaluated as robust by the European Court of Auditors ⁽²⁾.

The safeguards measures are detailed in the financial review of EU assistance in Palestine of November 2023 ⁽³⁾. Part of the financial support to the PA is explicitly linked to concrete reforms and is released based on confirmed evidence of achievement of agreed milestones.

The presentation of a draft Palestinian constitution ⁽⁴⁾ signals progress towards political reforms and participatory democracy. The draft constitution under public consultation contains references to the caring for the families of *inter alia* martyrs, the wounded and prisoners, to meet their humanitarian needs but does not indicate reinstatement of former schemes.

Subject to any revisions following the public consultation, the current provisions do not provide a basis for concluding that the abolished prisoners and martyrs scheme will be reinstated within the future Palestinian constitutional framework.

Further analysis will be conducted once a final text will be available following the conclusion of the public consultation, in line with the EU’s established clear position as set out before.

⁽¹⁾ <https://mjir.ogb.gov.ps/Decrees/Download/?p=f696dd21-7507-4d72-43fc-b3e140469b55.pdf&d=%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86-%D8%B1%D9%82%D9%85-4-%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%86%D8%A9-2025-%D9%85-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86>.

⁽²⁾ https://www.eca.europa.eu/lists/ecadocuments/sr13_14/sr13_14_en.pdf.

⁽³⁾ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/communication-commission-review-ongoing-financial-assistance-palestine_en.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://dostor.ps/public/chapters.php>.