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Answer given by Mr Lenarčič
on behalf of the European Commission
(11.10.2024)

Responding to a request for assistance from the World Health Organization, the Commission is currently coordinating the effort to implement medical evacuations of Palestinian patients to the EU through the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM)¹. As of 19 September 2024, four operations have taken place, evacuating a total of 37 paediatric patients and 79 relatives from Egypt to the EU. These operations have involved five Member States (Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Slovakia), which have offered transport capacities and hospital beds for these patients. Additional medical evacuations of Palestinian patients have been also organised bilaterally by Member States over the past months.

The decision to conduct such medical evacuations bilaterally or within the UCPM framework is voluntary and rests with the sovereign discretion of each Member State. The role of the Commission is to support medical evacuation operations conducted under the UCPM notably by offering support to Member States in terms of coordination, logistics and co-financing. The Commission is continuously in contact with Member States to ensure a coherent and collective Team Europe approach and to support national civil protection and health authorities in these complex operations.

The Commission is strongly committed to continuing its coordination efforts with Member States and other actors involved to move forward with additional medical evacuations.

¹ https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en