

## The EU mobilises additional €22 million in aid to Palestinians

It will focus on emergency preparedness and response, health, food security and protection activities for the most vulnerable, and be implemented through the United Nations and international partners.

This assistance comes from the overall 2019 budget in support to the Palestinians. Significant funds have already been disbursed this year, including a [contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East \(UNRWA\)](#). Last year the overall EU aid to Palestine and Palestinian refugees amounted to more than €370 million.

[The announcement was made](#) to coincide with the annual spring meeting of the international donor coordination group in support of the Palestinian economy, the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), hosted by the European Union in Brussels today. Since 1993, the AHLC has served as a key policy-level coordination mechanism for financial assistance to the Palestinian people, with a purpose of preserving the vision of a negotiated two-state solution.

High Representative/Vice-President, Federica **Mogherini**, said: *“We gathered here today in Brussels for the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee – thanks also to the tireless work of Norway – not only to renew our continued support to the Palestinians, but also to uphold the perspective of a two-state solution. Our economic assistance to the Palestinians cannot be separated from this political objective. We want to preserve the space for new negotiations because we want peace and security for Palestinians and Israelis alike.”*

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos **Stylianides**, said: *“The EU is committed to help Palestinians in need. As needs are increasing, our new humanitarian funds will help provide critical health and food security to those suffering from the very difficult situation in Gaza. We will also address protection challenges of the most vulnerable families in the West Bank.”*

In addition, senior officials today also took stock of progress achieved in the past twelve months as regards the implementation of the biggest ever investment project in Gaza: the [Gaza Central Desalination Plant Programme](#). The available water in Gaza is among the lowest in the world and 97% is unfit for human consumption. This project meets the most urgent water needs, providing water for the two million Palestinians living in Gaza, contributing to the environmental sustainability and economic development of Gaza.

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes **Hahn**, said: *“More than ever, securing the future and legitimacy of the Palestinian Authority, bringing Gaza and the West Bank back together and creating the basis for a future Palestinian state require our political attention and financial support. We are contributing annually more than €300 million to the Palestinian Authority, Palestinians and Palestine refugees.”*

*This is why I am happy to see the progress on the Gaza Central Desalination Plant. It proves that common ground between the Palestinian Authority and Israel can create conditions in which the international community can support long-term solutions that meet shared security concerns, development and humanitarian needs."*

## **Background**

### **EU development and cooperation aid:**

Development and cooperation aid to the Palestinian people is framed by the ["European Joint Strategy in Support of Palestine 2017-2020"](#) agreed by the EU institutions, 22 EU Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland and covers a wide range of areas, including capacity building, democratic governance and socio-economic development. In 2018, the EU support financed by the ENI instrument amounted to more than €328 million in total. In 2018, the EU's key areas of support were:

1. €155 million Direct Financial Support to Recurrent Expenditures of the Palestinian Authority (PEGASE), such as payments of salaries of West Bank civil servants, social allowances and health expenditure linked to East Jerusalem Hospitals.
2. €102 million in support of Palestinian refugees via UNRWA. Together with other EU financing lines this translated into an unprecedented contribution to UNRWA of €153 million in 2018, making the EU the biggest donor to this UN agency.
3. €71.35 million for project support to sustainable economic development and enhanced governance, improved access to self-sufficient water and energy services, and East Jerusalem.

### **EU humanitarian support:**

The European Commission provided €46 million in humanitarian funding in 2018.

€5.9 million was allocated to families in the West Bank living in Area C and East Jerusalem for emergency response to demolitions and evictions, critical assistance for essential services, and improved access to quality and safe education for vulnerable girls and boys affected by the crisis. €40.1 million have been allocated to humanitarian programmes in the Gaza Strip designed to address the worsening living conditions of populations affected by the closure of the Gaza strip. The programmes support the delivery of emergency healthcare, water and sanitation services, disaster preparedness, and protection activities.

Food security is provided mainly through cash support to households with an especially fragile economic situation, and by boosting agricultural production of small and medium producers.

### **For more information:**

[EU support to Palestinians](#)

[Office of the EU Representative \(West Bank and Gaza Strip, UNRWA\)](#)