



Press Release - European Union
Jerusalem
PR/17/2013
Friday 28 June 2013

The European Union provides nearly €10 million to support Palestinian families living in extreme poverty in the West Bank and Gaza

The European Union is making this year's second contribution to the Palestinian Authority's payment of social allowances to poor and vulnerable Palestinian families in the West Bank and Gaza. The EU contribution is €9.95 million and is provided through PEGASE^[1] financial mechanism.

Palestinian households living in extreme poverty receive assistance through the PA Ministry of Social Affairs national cash transfer programme. The programme provides a basic safety-net to the poorest and most vulnerable Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza through cash and in-kind assistance.

Today's contribution will reach 57,249 Palestinian families in need. More than half of this target population lives in Gaza. Eligible beneficiaries for the EU contribution are identified in cooperation with the PA Ministry of Finance.

"Social protection is at the centre of EU's policy on development cooperation. Last month we completed a fruitful round of policy dialogue with the Ministry of Social Affairs, who leads the social protection sector. We have taken stock of the substantial work undertaken by the Ministry of Social Affairs in terms of strategic planning, policy design, institutional capacity and discussed the way ahead", said the EU Representative, Mr John Gatt-Rutter. "The EU remains fully committed to support the Palestinian Authority in these efforts, in close cooperation with our partners. We plan to continue our technical assistance to the Ministry of Social Affairs for the coming three years to further promote good practice in policy formulation and allow the Palestinian Authority to realize in full its Social Protection Sector Strategy", added Mr. Gatt-Rutter

Payments are made across a network of local banks. In Gaza beneficiaries may collect their allowance over-the-counter from 29 June 2013 to 1 August 2013 at the bank branch indicated by their social worker. Beneficiaries living in the West Bank may collect their allowance as of 30 June 2013 directly from their individual bank accounts.

This €10 million contribution represents the second tranche of an overall 2013 financial commitment of €40 million allocated to the payment of social allowances for households living in extreme poverty. This overall amount, which includes funds for the EU budget and donors' contribution, covers almost half of the total budget of the Palestinian cash transfer programme.

Background:

Most of the European Union's assistance to the Palestinian Authority is channelled through PEGASE, the financial mechanism launched in 2008 to support the PA Reform and Development Plan (2008-2010) and the subsequent PA Palestinian National Plan (2011-2013). As well as helping to meet a substantial proportion of its running costs, European funds support major reform and development programmes in key ministries, to help prepare the PA for statehood. This is in line with the state-building plan put forward by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad in August 2009. Since February 2008, €1.44 billion have been disbursed through the PEGASE Direct Financial Support programmes. In addition, the EU has provided assistance to the Palestinian people through UNRWA and a wide range of cooperation projects.

Contact:

The Office of the European Union Representative

Antonia Zafeiri, Tel: +972 (0) 2 5415 859, Mobile +972 (0) 548 024 915 / Shadi Othman, Tel: +972 (0) 2 541 5888 ext 867, Mobile: +972 (0) 599 673 958 / <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/westbank/>