



Press Release - European Union  
Jerusalem  
PR/23/2013  
Friday 27 September 2013

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

For the third time this year the European Union is making a substantial 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 €9.87 million and is provided through the 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 56,988 Palestinian families in need. More than half live in Gaza. Eligible beneficiaries for the EU contribution are identified in cooperation with the PA Ministry of Finance.

*"At the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee meeting in New York earlier this week, the EU reaffirmed its commitment to support the Palestinian people through partnership with the Palestinian Authority. Today we are seeking to ensure that the PA has the means to provide care and protection to those most in need" said the EU Representative, Mr John Gatt-Rutter. "But this substantial contribution is only part of the European Union's wider efforts, together with the Ministry of Social Affairs to build a sustainable and high quality social protection system for the benefit of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. These include our on-going technical assistance programme to the Ministry of Social Affairs which aims to improve planning, coordination and delivery of social services with the participation of both civil society and the private sector", added Mr. Gatt-Rutter.*

Payments are made through a network of local banks. In Gaza beneficiaries may collect their allowance over-the-counter from 28 September 2013 to 31 October 2013 at the bank branch indicated by their social worker. Beneficiaries living in the West Bank may receive their allowance as of 29 September 2013 directly into their individual bank accounts.

This €9.87 million contribution represents the third tranche of an overall 2013 financial commitment of €40 million allocated to the payment of social allowances for households living in extreme poverty. This 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 the PA's running costs, European Union funds are supporting 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, €1.55 billion have been disbursed through the PEGASE direct financial support programmes. In addition, the EU has provided assistance to the Palestinian people through UNRWA as well as a wide range of other 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/>