Press release
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Finland provides €3 million to East Jerusalem Hospitals

The Government of Finland is providing today €3 million to help East Jerusalem hospitals maintain critical medical services to Palestinians. The contribution is channelled through the European Union's PEGASE mechanism.

Since 2012, the EU and its Member States have released over €66 million to help relieve the financial burden facing the six hospitals of the East Jerusalem Hospitals network. This amount has helped to cover a substantial part of the costs of referral of Palestinian patients for treatment to East Jerusalem Hospitals by the Palestinian Ministry of Health. Thanks to this support, hospital facilities have remained open and medical staff has continued working to provide much-needed specialized healthcare services to Palestinian patients. The EU mobilized its cash transfer mechanism, PEGASE, to deliver these funds to the Palestinian Authority. The mechanism is open to all donors.

"In the current situation, it is necessary to continue supporting human development in Palestine. East Jerusalem hospitals are an essential part of the Palestinian health care system. The equal access of all Palestinians to good-quality tertiary health care is vitally important," said **Ambassador Pirkko-Liisa Kyöstilä.** "*Maintaining the functioning of the East Jerusalem hospitals also means support to East Jerusalem as a whole, which Finland sees as essential." she added.*

"East Jerusalem hospitals are an integral part of the Palestinian healthcare system. They provide specialized services that cannot be found elsewhere in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The importance of these hospitals goes beyond their role as health service providers. As some of the last Palestinian-run institutions in Jerusalem, these hospitals have a particular significance," said the **European Union Representative, Mr Ralph Tarraf.** *"This is the first EU contribution to East Jerusalem hospitals this year. In 2015, nearly €25 million were disbursed to allow the hospitals to continue providing essential care to thousands of patients from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. I would like to thank Denmark, Italy and Finland for their contributions and support for this programme. This demonstrates the fruitful cooperation between the EU and its Member States in supporting the Palestinian institutions particularly in East Jerusalem," he added.*

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 Palestinian national plans. 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. Since February 2008, over €1.9 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.

The East Jerusalem Hospitals serve as the main centres for specialized care within the Palestinian health system. Patients needing services and procedures that are not available in the West Bank and Gaza – such as specialist oncology, renal care and cardiac surgeries - are referred for treatment in the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network facilities by the Palestinian Ministry of Health. There are six health institutions in East Jerusalem: Augusta Victoria Hospital, Makassed Hospital, St Joseph Hospital, St John's Eye Hospital, Palestinian Red Crescent Maternity Hospital and Princess Basma Rehabilitation Centre. The EU is supporting all of these six institutions through a programme with World Health Organization.

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