Press Release
Jerusalem

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The European Union and Ireland continue their support for the Palestinian people through a €15.3 million contribution for the payment of March salaries and pensions

The European Union is making today a contribution of approximately €15.3 million to the payment of March salaries and pensions of over 66,000 Palestinian civil servants and pensioners in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This contribution, which is channelled through the PEGASE[1] mechanism, is being funded by the European Union (€15.0 million) and the Government of Ireland (€0.3 million). The EU's contribution is part of the 2016 package of direct financial support for the Palestinian Authority announced last month for a total of €170.5 million.

"Today the European Union has once more renewed its commitment to Palestinian aspirations for statehood through its first 2016 contribution to the PA's salaries and pensions. Our continuing support is aimed and building the institutions of a future Palestinian state and ensuring that they become ever more transparent, accountable and democratic. Today's contribution also includes funds from the Government of Ireland, channeling once again their funds through the PEGASE mechanism" said the ***EU Representative Ralph Tarraf.*** *"The EU will continue to provide predictable and solid support to the budget of the Palestinian Authority. The EU is determined to do all it can to bring about peace amidst increasing threats to the two state solution," 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 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, around €2.0 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.

[1] *Mécanisme* ***P****alestino-****E****uropéen de* ***G****estion de l'****A****ide* ***S****ocio-****E****conomique (PEGASE)*

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