Jerusalem
Press Release
11 April 2017

The EU provides nearly €12 million to support families in need in the West Bank and Gaza

The European Union is making its contribution to the Palestinian Authority's (PA) quarterly payment of social allowances to 109,000 poor Palestinian families in the West Bank and Gaza. This contribution amounts to €11.75 million and is funded by the European Union (€10 million), the Governments of Austria (€1.25 million) and Ireland (€0.5 million). It will cover the payments made to around 71,500 families.

The EU supports the payments to households living in extreme poverty that are registered in the cash transfer programme of the Ministry of Social Development. Two thirds of the families benefiting from this programme live in Gaza.

The EU supports the Ministry of Social Development to better serve vulnerable families through an inclusive and equitable social protection system. This includes financial contributions to the cash transfer programme and capacity building programme for the improvement of social protection services.

"The fight against poverty is at the heart of the EU's political, economic, and social agenda. Therefore our partnership with the Ministry of Social Development remains one of the cornerstones of our engagement for the Palestinian people," said the ***Deputy EU Representative Tomas Niklasson****. "Through contributing to the payment of social allowances, the EU is supporting the Palestinian Authority in providing social protection to those in need. This is particularly crucial in Gaza where we are facing alarming and increasing poverty rates." he added.*

Background:

Most of the European Union's assistance to the Palestinian Authority is channelled through PEGASE(1) Direct Financial Support to the PA, the financial mechanism launched in 2008 to support the PA Reform and Development Plan (2008-2010) and the subsequent Palestinian national development plans. 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. Since February 2008, over €2,14 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.

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

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