Press Release
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The EU and Ministry of Social Development host Iftars for poor families during Ramadan

The EU Representative Ralph Tarraf and the Minister of Social Development Ibrahim Al Shaer launched today a series of Iftars to be organized during the Holy month of Ramadan. The Iftars kicked off at the SOS Children's Village in Bethlehem which brought together children, local officials, and social workers from the Ministry. During the month, ten Iftars will be organized by the EU and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) in the West Bank and Gaza for beneficiaries of the Cash Transfer Programme (CTP).

The EU is the lead donor in the social protection sector in Palestine. Palestinian households living in extreme poverty receive assistance through the 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.

The EU and Member States will be contributing over € 60million this year for the payment of social allowances to poor and vulnerable Palestinian families in the West Bank and Gaza.

"*We mark the Holy month of Ramadan by showing respect, compassion, and empathy. We start the first week of Ramadan here at the SOS village among children who need us most, not only during Ramadan but every day of the year* ," said the **EU Representative Ralph Tarraf**. "*As we celebrate Ramadan, we recall our commitment as EU towards the most vulnerable here in Palestine. Over the past years, our partnership with the Ministry of Social Development has helped in protecting them against a tough volatile reality. This partnership is particularly important in Gaza where the situation is getting tougher and the poorest are facing increasing challenges*." he added.

The joint Ramadan Iftars will be organized for the beneficiaries of the CTP in nine locations of the West Bank and Gaza: SOS Children's Village – Bethlehem, Umm Al Kheir – Yatta, Old City of Hebron, Abu Nuwwar- East Jerusalem, Ein Al-Beida-Tubas, Burin- Nablus, Tura Al-Gharbiya- Jenin, Beit Sira- Ramallah, and Gaza.

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 €2,3 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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