Press Release

THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA CONTRIBUTES US$ 63 MILLION TO UNRWA FOR PROJECTS IN GAZA, THE WEST BANK AND JORDAN



Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, Dr. Khalid Sulaiman Alkhudairy and the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Pierre Krähenbühl address journalists at the signing of four agreements for projects to be implemented in Gaza, the West Bank and Jordan. This SFD contribution totaled US$ 63 million.

30 November 2018
Jerusalem

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), has contributed US$ 63 million for projects to be implemented in Gaza, the West Bank and Jordan. Four agreements were signed on 28 November by the SFD Vice-Chairman and Managing Director, Dr. Khalid Sulaiman Alkhudairy, and the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Pierre Krähenbühl.

The first agreement, valued at US$ 31 million, will support ongoing projects, including the reconstruction of shelters, construction of new health centers and two UNRWA schools, maintenance of schools and fuel supply in Gaza. The second agreement, valued at US$ 17 million, will assist UNRWA in the reconstruction and furnishing of several health centers, camp offices and schools in the West Bank, comprehensive maintenance of UNRWA premises in East-Jerusalem and the implementation of several other ongoing projects. The third agreement, valued at US$ 8 million, will provide funds for comprehensive maintenance for UNRWA schools and Health Centers in

Jordan. While the fourth agreement valued at US$ 7 million, will provide funds for maintaining UNRWA facilities across all its fields of operations.

Dr. Khalid Alkhudairy said: “We are a proud partner of UNRWA, which is doing an excellent job serving Palestine refugees. We shall continue to support UNRWA and we look forward as always to witnessing the impact of these projects on Palestine refugees ”.

Expressing his gratitude, Mr. Krähenbühl said: “I am extremely grateful to the government and the people of Saudi Arabia for the sustained support that the Kingdom has extended to Palestine Refugees and to UNRWA services over the years. I would like to express particular appreciation for the role played by the Saudi Fund for Development and recognition for the trust it places in the Agency. Our partnership with the Fund is of high importance and deeply appreciated”.

In 2018, UNRWA faced its largest budget shortfall since its founding. Support from dedicated partners like the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has enabled the Agency to sustain vital services to Palestine refugees across the Middle East.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

UNRWA is confronted with an increased demand for services resulting from a growth in the number of registered Palestine refugees, the extent of their vulnerability and their deepening poverty. UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions and financial support has been outpaced by the growth in needs. As a result, the UNRWA programme budget, which supports the delivery of core essential services, operates with a large shortfall. UNRWA encourages all Member States to work collectively to exert all possible efforts to fully fund the Agency's programme budget. UNRWA emergency programmes and key projects, also operating with large shortfalls, are funded through separate funding portals.

UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5.4 million Palestine refugees registered with UNRWA across its five fields of operation. Its mission is to help Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip achieve their full human development potential, pending a just and lasting solution to their plight. UNRWA services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance.

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