
Aid to the Palestinians: All elements of the Temporary International Mechanism now operational

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The European Commission has started social allowance payments to those in urgent need in the Palestinian Territories. This means that all three elements of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) developed by the European Commission, at the request of the European Council and of the Middle East Quartet (EU, US, UN and Russia), are now up and running. The three elements agreed in June were support for health services, utilities, and social allowances. The new allowances (of around €270 each) will be made to those who have suffered a significant loss of income due to the financial crisis, to pensioners and other social hardship cases. Earlier actions under the TIM have included delivery of fuel to hospitals and water pumps to protect public health, and social allowance payments to Palestinian doctors and nurses, to enable them to continue to work.

The Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner said: "I am glad to say that we are now delivering under all elements of the TIM: essential supplies for hospitals, the uninterrupted supply of energy and the payment of social allowances. With the TIM we have kept our promise to help relieve the suffering of the Palestinian people during the current crisis – and I believe it is crucial that the mechanism should be continued. I hope that the three-month review foreseen for September will decide to prolong an initiative that is bringing very concrete benefits to the Palestinian people."

She added, "The TIM is an example of the constructive role that the EU can play in the Middle East. It is due to the efforts of the Commission that the project was launched, and the operation, led by a European team, managing contributions from the European Commission and Member States, is proof of the EU's capacity to act in the most difficult circumstances".

So far the TIM has benefited

- 413 primary health care centres, and 22 hospitals, which have received essential medical supplies and running costs
- 1.3 million people in the Gaza strip have access to water, health care and sanitation thanks to the TIM
- 625,000 people will benefit from social allowances under TIM, including 11,500 health workers.
- Payments of additional allowances will depend on pledges received from other donors
- TIM has delivered over 1.5 million litres of fuel to ensure the continued supply of energy, in particular for hospitals and water sanitation in the Gaza Strip following the destruction of the Gaza power plant in July.

The Commission has allocated €105 million to the TIM bringing the total made available from the Community Budget so far this year to the Palestinian people to €330 million. So far, EU Member States are contributing around €60 million to the TIM.

For more information:

For more information on EU-West Bank and Gaza Strip relations:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/qaza/intro/index.htm