



---

*Plenary sitting*

---

**B8-0085/2018**

5.2.2018

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation of UNRWA  
(2018/2553(RSP))

**Patrick Le Hyaric, Neoklis Sylikiotis, Gabriele Zimmer, Marina Albiol Guzmán, Marisa Matias, Martina Michels, Sofia Sakorafa, Eleonora Forenza, Martina Anderson, Matt Carthy, Lynn Boylan, Liadh Ní Riada, Takis Hadjigeorgiou, Paloma López Bermejo, Nikolaos Chountis, Merja Kyllönen, Rina Ronja Kari, Ángela Vallina, Miguel Urbán Crespo, Tania González Peñas, Estefanía Torres Martínez, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Xabier Benito Ziluaga, Marie-Pierre Vieu, Stelios Kouloglou, Barbara Spinelli, Maria Lidia Senra Rodríguez, Josu Juaristi Abaunz, Dimitrios Papadimoulis, João Ferreira, João Pimenta Lopes, Miguel Viegas, Curzio Maltese, Javier Couso Permuy, Dennis de Jong, Anne-Marie Mineur, Kateřina Konečná,**  
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of UNRWA  
(2018/2553(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to UN General Assembly Resolutions 194 (III), 72/80, 72/81 and 72/82 and UN Security Council Resolutions 242 (1967), 252 (1968), 338 (1972), 476 (1980), 478 (1980) and 1860 (2009),
  - having regard to the Charter of the United Nations,
  - having regard to the Fourth Geneva Convention,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
  - having regard to the EU Guidelines on international humanitarian law, on human rights defenders, on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief,
  - having regard to its previous resolutions,
  - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas UNRWA was established by the UN General Assembly in 1949 after hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were expelled from their homes during the 1948 war that followed the creation of the state of Israel and, for nearly 70 years, has been the lifeline for the more than five million registered Palestinian refugees in the Palestinian occupied territories, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria;
- B. whereas, pending the just resolution of the question of Palestinian refugees, the UN General Assembly has continued to emphasise in its resolutions the need for the Agency to continue its work and the essential role that has been played by UNRWA for over sixty-five years in providing vital services to Palestinian refugees; whereas the UN General Assembly has also reiterated its recognition of UNRWA's work, stressing the importance of its unimpeded operations and its provision of services for the well-being, protection and human development of the Palestinian refugees and for the stability of the region; whereas, in affirming the need for UNRWA's work to continue, the UN General Assembly has renewed UNRWA's mandate many times - most recently until 30 June 2020 by a vote of 167 UN member states;
- C. whereas UNRWA is funded mainly by voluntary contributions from UN member states, and has been mandated to provide education, healthcare, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvements, protection, microfinance and humanitarian aid to some 5 million Palestinian refugees living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank,

including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip;

- D. whereas the US Department of State announced on 16 January 2018 that it was withholding USD 65 million out of a USD 125 million aid package earmarked for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA); whereas UNRWA received USD 365 million from the United States in the 2017 fiscal year which ended in December 2017;
- E. whereas the US and UNRWA signed a framework agreement in December 2017 affirming the US's commitment to providing sufficient, predictable and flexible funding to UNRWA;
- F. whereas the US decision to cut aid to UNRWA will cause worse hardship in Gaza; whereas 70 % of the two million residents there depend on support from UNRWA and other humanitarian agencies for their basic needs; whereas UNRWA, which runs 700 schools and 137 clinics and provides 1.7 million food-insecure Palestinian refugees with emergency food and cash assistance in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and the occupied Palestinian territories, including the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza, has made an international appeal for funds;
- G. whereas UNRWA has taken unprecedented and far-reaching internal measures to reduce the cost of the Agency's structure and to sharply tighten controls on expenditure, increasing the efficiency of its operations while preserving the quality and breadth of its core services in a very challenging environment; whereas both the EU and the US have commended UNRWA for the reforms implemented so-far;
1. Express its recognition for the excellent and valuable work carried out by UNRWA since 1950 helping Palestinian refugees in need;
  2. Condemns the US decision to cut aid to UNRWA, as cutting its planned funding by more than half could prove catastrophic for millions of Palestinian refugees; urges the US Government to respect its framework agreement with UNRWA, as well as the Good Humanitarian Donorship principles;
  3. Reiterates its solidarity with the millions of Palestinian refugees and recalls the responsibility assumed by the European Union and the international community to assist them until a just and lasting solution is found;
  4. Underlines that the US decision will have devastating consequences for vulnerable Palestinian refugees across the Middle East, including 525 000 refugee children in the West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria who depend on the agency for their education, and will have an impact on access to emergency food and cash assistance for 1.7 million food-insecure Palestinian refugees, most of whom live in Gaza and Syria, and on access to primary healthcare, including pre-natal care, for 3 million refugees;
  5. Recalls that funds earmarked for humanitarian aid and relief to refugees and deprived populations cannot be used as bargaining chips in international negotiations;
  6. Calls for the EU and its Member States to mobilise additional funding for the UNRWA Programme Budget in 2018 to support the Agency in addressing its short-term financial

needs in order to preserve the continuity of its services, including – if necessary – through the Emergency Aid reserves; calls also for the EU and its Member States to take a leading role at international level to find collective solutions to the financial situation of UNRWA;

7. Stresses that UNRWA is an important factor of stability and it would contradict established principles of international law to gradually dismantle the one agency that was established by the international community to protect the rights of the Palestinian refugees and provide them with essential services;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Secretary General of the United Nations, the US Department of State, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.