

**Question for written answer E-002512/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Anna Fotyga (ECR)

Subject: Subject: UNRWA ethics office report and EU funding of UNRWA activities

On 26 June, the European Commission pledged an additional EUR 21 million to support UNRWA for 2019 (on top of the EUR 82 million already paid out this year). The purpose of the extra funds, according to Commissioner Hahn, was to provide the necessary support to the people who are the targets of UNRWA's activities, including by giving them access to education and healthcare. At the same time, however, a confidential internal report from UNRWA's ethics office which was recently leaked to the media accuses the members of the organisation's senior management of power abuses for personal gain, nepotism, discrimination, intimidation of employees, inappropriate sexual behaviour and embezzlement of funds. According to media reports, some of the most serious accusations – including those concerning the illegal use of funds – relate to the Commissioner-General. The Netherlands and Switzerland have already suspended their financing of UNRWA as a result of the allegations made in the report. In light of the above, I would like to ask:

- 1) Was the Commission aware of the irregularities noted in the report by the UNRWA' ethics office when it decided to allocate an additional EUR 21 million?
- 2) How does it monitor the spending of funds given by the EU to UNRWA, and is the scale of the irregularity not a sign that the spending of European taxpayer money is not being properly supervised?
- 3) What action will it take to prevent EU money from being used in a way that is incompatible with its intended purpose in the future, and is it planning, like Switzerland and the Netherlands, to suspend the payment of funds to UNRWA until further light has been shed on the shocking accusations?