

## **EU: Women's funding won't go to Palestinian ICC suit against Israel**

The Jerusalem Post, Tovah Lazaroff, 30 August 2016

**The UN and the EU supports “advocacy” and “capacity building components” of a plan that helps Palestinian women be more involved with decision making at the local and international levels.**

The European Union does not intend to fund portions of a Palestinian women's empowerment plan that deals with building a case against Israel before the International Criminal Court, EU spokesperson Maja Kocijancic told *The Jerusalem Post* on Tuesday.

The \$2.1 million women's empowerment plan, which focuses primarily on fighting the Israeli “occupation,” was developed with EU funds and organizational assistance from UN Women.

The EU, however, only intends to financially support a minor portion of the plan – \$93,330 – that deals with helping Palestinian women participate in the decision making process at the local and international levels.

“This plan is a Palestinian plan and doesn't necessary reflect the positions of the European Union [or] the UN Women,” Kocijancic told the Post in an email in response to a story about the initiative the paper published over the weekend.

The UN and the EU supports “advocacy” and “capacity building components of the plan” that addresses “Palestinian women participation in decision-making,” Kocijancic said.

In her comments she attempted to draw a fine line distinction between the EU and the UN's involvement in the development of the plan, whose primary goals are not supported in their entirety by both entities.

Both EU and UN officials were present at the launch of the Palestinian Authority's launch of the \$2.1m. plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

The resolution, which the UNSC approved in 2000, calls for the inclusion of women in politics, peace building and security initiatives. It speaks of the need to protect women from sexual and gender based violence as well as their rights to protection under international law.

“The EU and its Member States have a long-standing commitment to the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, in its internal and external action,” Kocijancic said.

“Through a project implemented by the UN Women, the EU supported the PA in developing a national plan for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325,” Kocijancic said.

A booklet describing the PA's National Action Plan to implement UNSCR 1325, is stamped with the logos of the UN, EU and the PA.

The PA is now working with the UN to raise the \$2.1m.necessary to implement the plan.

According to the activities described in the booklet, \$1.38m. of the plans budget would go to the PA's global campaign against Israel's "occupation" of the West Bank, including attempts to sway the ICC to bring a "war crimes" suit against Israel.

The overall description of how the \$1.38m. would be spent stated that it would go to "prosecuting the Israeli occupation and preventing it from evading punishment alongside rectifying the damage done to Palestinian women in accordance with or through international and national mechanisms."

According to the booklet, the plan also earmarks \$624,760 in funds for "strengthening the protection of Palestinian women, especially in terms of confronting the violations of the Israeli occupation." Some portions of this section deal with domestic violence as well.

Funds were also provided for health and transportation services for women impacted by IDF related violence and domestic violence.

Kocijancic said the EU had given the PA funds for "advancing the implication of UNSCR 1325" through a three-year grant of 488,773 Euros from the EU Peacebuilding Initiative, that covers the period of January 2015 to December 2017. The Peacebuilding Initiative provides support for efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The objective of the project funded by the grant was to "contribute to the development of an enabling environment for women's leadership and participation in conflict resolution, state-building and peace processes in Palestine on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 1325."

"The EU funded project is not supporting the implementation of any other components of the plan such as documenting crimes against Palestinian women by the Israeli occupation or filing cases against Israel at the ICC," said Kocijancic.

To date, only some 63 countries, including the US and Canada, have adopted a National Action Plan under UNSCR 1325. Israel has not yet done so.

At the Ramallah launch of the plan, the EU's head of cooperation in its Jerusalem office, Alessandra Viezzer, spoke of her support for the plan.

"It is important that this plan, which is being launched today, does not remain incomplete, but is implemented," she said.

"Please rest assured that on behalf of the EU, we stand here committed to support in our modest capacity your advocacy efforts and other efforts for the implementation of the plan," Viezzer said.