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Plenary sitting

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<TitreType>MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION</TitreType>

<TitreSuite>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</TitreSuite>

<TitreRecueil>pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure</TitreRecueil>

<Titre>on the situation of UNRWA</Titre>

<DocRef>(2018/2553(RSP))</DocRef>

<RepeatBlock-By><Depute>Cristian Dan Preda, Tomáš Zdechovský, Lorenzo Cesa</Depute>

<Commission>{PPE}on behalf of the PPE Group</Commission>

</RepeatBlock-By>

B8‑0093/2018

European Parliament resolution on the situation of UNRWA

(2018/2553(RSP))

*The European Parliament*,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA),

– having regard to UN General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949 on assistance to Palestine refugees,

– having regard to the Joint Declaration of the EU and UNRWA of 7 June 2017 on European Union support to UNRWA (2017-2020),

– having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas UNRWA is a United Nations agency established by the General Assembly in 1949 and mandated to provide assistance and protection to some 5 million registered Palestine refugees; whereas UNRWA’s services encompass education, health care, relief and social services, camp infrastructure and improvement, protection and microfinance;

B. whereas the spokesperson of the US State Department stated on 16 January 2018 that the United States had committed a voluntary contribution of USD 60 million to UNRWA for 2018; whereas the remaining USD 65 million is suspended; whereas, according to the spokesperson, the United States would like to see some revisions made to how UNRWA operates; whereas the Unites States has voiced the need for UNRWA to seek out new voluntary funding streams and to increase burden-sharing among its donors; whereas the United States is the largest single-country donor to UNRWA;

C. whereas the USD 60 million provided to the UNRWA Programme Budget went to helping to sustain schools and health services by ensuring that teachers’ and healthcare providers’ salaries continue through UNRWA’s operations in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza;

D. whereas the UNRWA Commissioner-General stated on 17 January 2018 that UNRWA faces a formidable challenge in upholding its mandate and preserving key services such as education and health care for Palestine refugees;

E. whereas the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy recognised on 7 June 2017 the essential role of the agency in the Middle East: ‘With its tireless work, UNRWA keeps supporting Palestine refugees, providing education, promoting socio-economic development and stability in the Middle East,’ she said. ‘The international support is key to UNRWA: the European Union will keep investing in one of the pillars of its Middle East peace policy.’;

F. whereas on 31 January 2018 the Commission adopted a new EUR 42.5 million assistance package benefiting Palestinians, including substantial support in East Jerusalem; whereas EUR 107 million was also provided to UNRWA; whereas the European Union is the second largest donor to UNRWA;

1. Stresses that UNRWA’s work helps ensure that the essential needs for the well-being, protection and human development of Palestine refugees are met within its five fields of operation;

2. Expresses its concern at UNWRA’s funding crisis; urges all donors to honour their promises to the agency;

3 Notes that the EU is committed to continuing to assist UNRWA in securing financial resources to enable the agency to support Palestine refugees; underlines that the EU will essentially contribute to the funding of quality education for 500 000 children, primary health care for more than 3.5 million patients and assistance to over 250 000 acutely vulnerable Palestine refugees;

4. Welcomes the fact that UNRWA intends to sustain internal measures aimed at containing costs and achieving further efficiency gains while pursuing other areas where efficiencies may be possible;

5. Welcomes the agency’s commitment to continuing reform efforts aimed at improving its management structures and towards enhanced transparency, accountability and internal oversight; stresses that these efforts are of paramount importance in order to ensure that EU funds are used for their intended purposes and for advancing the objectives of peace in the Middle East; points out the need for enhanced controls that would prevent the misuse of UNWRA’s EU-funded facilities by Hamas;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice‑President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the US Administration and Congress and the Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.