

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2238/06
by Patrick Gaubert (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Conditions for continuing European Union financial aid to Palestine

The European Union has decided to provisionally suspend direct aid to the Palestinian Government while continuing humanitarian assistance to the people, which is in accordance with its firm stance that the continuation of its financial aid must be subject to the Palestinian Authority respecting three principles (abandoning of violence, recognising the State of Israel and respecting the previously signed Israeli-Palestinian agreements) and follows the failure of the new Hamas Government to give any commitment in this regard. In the context of putting in place a temporary mechanism to aid the Palestinians and further to the letter dated 7 March 2006 from Members to Ms Ferrero-Waldner and Mr Javier Solana, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What channels, either existing or yet to be created, does the Commission intend to use to give real support to the people? How would it envisage secure funding projects with President Mahmoud Abbas's office acting as intermediary?
2. Does the Commission intend to continue to send aid via the World Bank and the World Bank Reform Trust Fund, which distributes funds to the Palestinian Authority in exchange for tax reforms?
3. In terms of efficiency and transparency, what is the Commission's evaluation of the management of Community funds which it grants to the Palestinians either directly or via the UNRWA or an NGO? What specific projects have been undertaken to date to come to the aid of the population on a daily basis?
4. What transparency and supervisory mechanisms does the Commission intend to put in place to verify how the Community funds which are to be granted to the Palestinian people via the selected channels are finally allocated?