

Question for written answer P-011858/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Bastiaan Belder (EFD)

Subject: VP/HR - European Court of Auditors report documenting corruption and misuse of EU aid in the Palestinian Territories

Has the VP/HR taken note of the article in *The Sunday Times* of 13 October 2013¹, mentioned in a press release by the AJC Transatlantic Institute², regarding an unpublished report by the Court of Auditors detailing how EU aid to Palestine has been 'misspent, squandered or lost to corruption' between 2008 and 2012?

How do the findings relate to the statement by the High Representative on 22 February 2013 that 'a strict and extensive mechanism of audit and verification is in place which allows the European Union to verify the precise destination of every single Euro'³?

Will the VP/HR consider insisting on the immediate release of the report to the public? Does she agree that, given the severity of the matter and the long-standing evidence of widespread corruption within the Palestinian Government (as documented in the April 2013 report by AMAN-Transparency Palestine⁴), this requires immediate clarification and action?

What measures does the VP/HR envisage to hold those responsible for the abuses accountable? Is she willing to launch a full investigation into corruption and misuse of aid and, depending on the findings, implement effective safeguards to ensure that European aid is being used for the full benefit of the Palestinian people?

¹ Bojan Pancevski, '£1.95bn EU aid lost in Palestine', *The Sunday Times*, 13 October 2013.
http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/world_news/Middle_East/article1326858.ece

² 'TAI calls for investigation into corruption and misuse of Palestinian aid', 14 October 2013.
<http://www.transatlanticinstitute.org/2013/10/14/tai-calls-for-investigation-into-corruption-and-misuse-of-palestinian-aid/>

³ Answer given by Vice-President / High Representative Baroness Ashton on behalf of the Commission, 22 February 2013

⁴ 'Corruption Report – Palestine 2012', AMAN-Transparency Palestine, April 2013.
<http://www.aman-palestine.org/data/uploads/62444af9c6958242d3ff8c0e76d9b03e.pdf>