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Ressort: Politik

CHF 20 million allocated to occupied Palestinian territory

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At its meeting on 21 May 2025, the Federal Council decided to grant CHF 9 million to four humanitarian organisations to support Palestinians affected by the conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory. A further CHF 10 million will be allocated to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for its programme in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

The Federal Council has decided to make a contribution of CHF 9 million to four humanitarian organizations working on behalf of those affected by the conflict in the occupied Palestinian territory. This funding will be divided between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the Swiss Red Cross/Palestine Red Crescent Society for activities in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East. CHF 1 million will also be earmarked to implement the Colonna report's recommendations for reinforcing UNRWA's impartiality.

Switzerland's total humanitarian budget for the occupied Palestinian territory in 2025 is currently CHF 21 million. The CHF 9 million granted today is in addition to the CHF 12 million already allocated this year to Switzerland's partner humanitarian organizations, including the WFP, the ICRC, and Swiss NGOs. UNRWA projects play a key role in the health, education, and protection of civilians of the 3.5 million Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The CHF 10 million allocated by the Federal Council for 2025 is specifically intended to support UNRWA's activities in these three countries.

The Federal Council also believes that UNRWA's governance needs to be improved - particularly its impartiality. It has therefore allocated CHF 1 million to help implement the recommendations of the Colonna report, joining a number of other donors. The report by the former French foreign minister Catherine Colonna was mandated by the UN Secretary General and published on 22 April 2024. It made 50 recommendations, which UNRWA has undertaken to implement in full.

Call for reinstatement of ceasefire and humanitarian access

The Federal Council expresses its deep concern at the humanitarian tragedy unfolding in the Gaza Strip, exacerbated by the continuing lack of humanitarian access. Israel must respect its obligations under international humanitarian law as an occupying power. It must also apply the Geneva Conventions, which

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require the delivery of relief supplies as well as the rapid and unimpeded provision of humanitarian assistance to all those who need it, impartially and without discrimination. The Federal Council calls for immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip, the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages, and the re-establishment of a ceasefire.

It reaffirms the need for strict compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, by all parties to the conflict. It refers to the following international treaties and protocols:
Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols - Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions (1949): the principle of impartiality in relief efforts. - Additional Protocol I (1977), Article 70: providing relief impartially and without discrimination. - Additional Protocol II (1977), Article 18: impartial and non-discriminatory humanitarian assistance. (SOURCE: Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, FDFA)

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