

US AND UN REFUGEE AGENCY TENTATIVELY RENEWING TIES

After important Western states in Europe and North America—cut or curtailed ties with the UN agency for Palestinian refugees—UNRWA— because it was caught misusing funds, UNRWA said this week that the United States had restored ties under a new bilateral agreement.

But the divergent texts of the official UNRWA announcement in Arabic and English suggested a tense behind-the-scenes drama where the United States had demanded that UNRWA comply with strict guidelines to avoid corruption, complicity with terror groups and political prejudice.

The Arabic text hints strongly that the first US aid installment was made “in principle” — *mab daiyyan* in Arabic—and it underscores that the US demanded UNRWA be scrupulously neutral and that UNRWA make aid available only to legitimate refugees who are registered.

The following is the text of the Arabic announcement by UNRWA with our translation.

The United States announced today (July 26—ed.) that it was making an additional contribution in the amount of \$135.8 million (dollars) to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

In April, the US government reinstated [restored] its support for the agency, providing \$150 million in principle to the UN agency that provides life-saving services to the registered and the eligible Palestine refugees in all regions of the Middle East.

The United States also provided nearly \$33 million in humanitarian assistance to UNRWA in May in response to violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The funding announcement which accompanied the signing of the bilateral United States and UNRWA cooperation agreement set forth a framework establishing common goals and priorities to support humanitarian assistance, human development, and the protection of Palestine refugees.

UNRWA Commissioner-General Philip Lazzarini said: "The signing of the US-UNRWA Framework for Action and the additional support demonstrates that we once again have a

continuing partner in the US who understands the need to provide critical assistance to some of the most vulnerable refugees in the region."

This additional funding will continue to support UNRWA's core budget - the majority of which finances the operation of more than 700 schools educating more than half a million children, as well as 140 primary health clinics providing 8.5 million patient consultations annually - as well as emergency appeals in response to dire humanitarian challenges in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank (which includes East Jerusalem) and Gaza. These funds support food, emergency cash assistance, emergency health, mental health and psychosocial support, emergency education, protection, water and sanitation, and the response to COVID-19.

It is noted that cooperation frameworks are the traditional mechanism through which the United States and international agencies set common goals and priorities. The agreement between UNRWA and the United States reaffirms both parties' commitment to the humanitarian principles of the United Nations, including the principle of neutrality.

The following is the official UNRWA TEXT IN THE ORIGINAL ARABIC--

أعلنت الولايات المتحدة اليوم أنها تقوم بالتبرع بمبلغ إضافي قدره 135,8 مليون دولار لوكالة الأمم المتحدة لإغاثة وتشغيل اللاجئين الفلسطينيين في الشرق الأدنى (الأونروا). وفي نيسان، أعادت الحكومة الأمريكية دعمها للوكالة، حيث قدمت 150 مليون دولار مبدئياً للوكالة الأممية التي تقدم خدمات منقذة للحياة للاجئين الفلسطينيين المسجلين والمؤهلين في جميع أرجاء الشرق الأوسط.

كما قدمت الولايات المتحدة ما يقرب من 33 مليون دولار من المساعدات الإنسانية للأونروا في أيار استجابة للعنف في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة.

יأتي إعلان التمويل جنبا إلى جنب مع توقيع الولايات المتحدة والأونروا على إطار عمل للتعاون يحدد الأهداف والأولويات المشتركة لدعم المساعدة الإنسانية والتنمية البشرية وحماية لاجئي فلسطين.

وصرح المفوض العام للأونروا فيليب لازاريني قائلا: "إن توقيع إطار عمل الولايات المتحدة والأونروا والدعم الإضافي يوضح أن لدينا مرة أخرى شريكا مستمرا في الولايات المتحدة يتفهم الحاجة إلى تقديم مساعدة حرجية لبعض اللاجئين الأشد عرضة للمخاطر في المنطقة".

وسيعمل هذا التمويل الإضافي على مواصلة دعم الميزانية الرئيسية للأونروا - والتي تذهب غالبيتها إلى تمويل تشغيل أكثر من 700 مدرسة لتعليم أكثر من نصف مليون طفل إضافة إلى 140 عيادة صحية أولية تقدم 8,5 مليون استشارة مريض سنويا - علاوة على مناشدات الطوارئ استجابة للتحديات الإنسانية الأليمة في سوريا ولبنان والأردن والضفة الغربية (التي تشمل القدس الشرقية) وغزة.

تدعم هذه الأموال الغذاء، والمساعدات النقدية الطارئة، والصحة الطارئة، والصحة العقلية والإسناد النفسي الاجتماعي، والتعليم في حالات الطوارئ، والحماية، والمياه والصرف الصحي، والاستجابة لفيروس كوفيد-19.

ويذكر أن أطر عمل التعاون هي الآلية التقليدية التي من خلالها تضع الولايات المتحدة والوكالات الدولية أهدافا وأولويات مشتركة. وتؤكد الاتفاقية بين الأونروا والولايات المتحدة من جديد التزام الطرفين بالمبادئ الإنسانية للأمم المتحدة، بما في ذلك مبدأ الحياد.

The following is UNRWA'S OFFICIAL STATEMENT IN ENGLISH.

UNITED STATES ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PALESTINE REFUGEES

17 July 2021

Humanitarian Assistance Comes as U.S., UNRWA Sign Official Framework Agreement

Today, the United States announced that it is contributing an additional US\$135.8 million to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East ([UNRWA](#)). In April, the U.S. government restored its support for the Agency, providing an initial \$150 million to the UN agency providing life-saving services to eligible registered Palestine refugees across the Middle East. The United States also provided nearly \$33 million in humanitarian assistance to UNRWA in May in response to the violence in the West Bank and Gaza. The funding announcement comes alongside the United States and UNRWA signing a [Framework for Cooperation](#) that establishes shared goals and priorities in support of humanitarian assistance, human development, and protection of Palestine refugees.

“The signing of the U.S.-UNRWA Framework and additional support demonstrates we once again have an ongoing partner in the United States that understands the need to provide critical assistance to some of the region’s most vulnerable refugees,” stated UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini.

The additional funding will continue to support the core budget of UNRWA -- the majority of which funds the operation of more than 700 schools educating over half a million children and 140 primary health clinics providing 8.5 million patient consultations a year -- as well as [emergency appeals](#) to respond to dire humanitarian challenges in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank (including in East Jerusalem) and Gaza. These funds support food, emergency cash assistance, emergency health, mental health and psychosocial support, education in emergencies, protection, water and sanitation, and COVID-19 response.

Frameworks for cooperation are the traditional mechanism by which the United States and international agencies establish shared goals and priorities. The agreement between the UNRWA and the United States reaffirms both parties' commitment to the United Nations' humanitarian principles, including the principle of neutrality.

[United States Announces Additional Support Palestine Refugees | UNRWA](#)