



STATEMENTS BY THE SPOKESPERSON

Statement by the Spokesperson on Gaza and intra-Palestinian reconciliation

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Following the agreement signed in Cairo on 12 October and the handover of Gaza crossings to the Palestinian Authority on 1 November, the European Union reaffirms its readiness to mobilise its full support to current efforts to reunite Gaza and the West Bank under one single and legitimate Palestinian Authority. While the agreement and the handover were important and welcome steps in this regard, they need to be followed up by further steps to enable the Palestinian Authority to resume its full responsibilities in Gaza and achieve intra-Palestinian reconciliation.

We are having consultations internally, with key international partners, as well as within the Quartet, on how best to help this process to succeed. How to grant targeted support to Gaza, in particular to the citizens, is part of these consultations. In light of special circumstances and needs, the EU has decided to exceptionally increase its annual contribution to UNRWA by another EUR 10.5 million. A considerable part of this funding is dedicated to Palestine refugees in Gaza, in particular for health and education.

We are also making preparations to engage with all relevant stakeholders on a possible redeployment of EUBAM Rafah, if this can help facilitate the opening of the Rafah crossing point, which would be an important step forward for freedom of movement for the people of Gaza.

All of the above is integral part of the review of modalities of EU engagement that was announced by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini and

Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
Johannes Hahn at the Informal Foreign Ministers Meeting in Tallinn in September. The purpose of this review is to make our engagement in support of a two-state solution more effective and more flexible to respond to important developments, such as the ones in Gaza.

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