



European Union

Statement

WHO

156th Executive Board

(3-11 February 2025)

**Agenda item 17- Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory,
including east Jerusalem**

Geneva, 6 February 2025

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Agenda Item 17- Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem

Chair,

Director General,

Excellencies,

Colleagues,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova* align themselves with this statement.

We would like to thank for the report on **“Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem”**.

The EU warmly welcomes the ceasefire agreement in Gaza, which will allow the phased release of the hostages, end hostilities and ease the humanitarian suffering in Gaza. It is vital that the deal is fully implemented to allow all the hostages to be released, and to ensure a permanent end to hostilities.

Since the horrific Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel on 7 October, 2023, hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians have been caught up in violence which has spread across the region. The EU deplores the unacceptable number of civilian casualties, especially women and children, in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as the catastrophic levels of hunger, lack of drinking water and imminent risk of famine caused by the insufficient entry of aid into Gaza.

The EU reiterates its gravest concern about the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. As outlined in the DG report, the health system in the Gaza Strip has been severely degraded by attacks on healthcare with medication shortages and disruptions to health services. Many health facilities

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

no longer function or can only provide limited services in dire conditions. According to the WHO data, between 1 January 2024 and 31 August 2024, 486 attacks on healthcare were reported in the occupied Palestinian territory. The EU supports the WHO efforts to scale up its operations, to mobilise critical supplies and resources to address immediate needs, to organise medical evacuations and to support early recovery efforts.

We call for full and unimpeded access for humanitarian aid to the Gaza strip and that aid can be effectively distributed to those in need, including by UN agencies and notably UNRWA. The EU welcomes the increase in aid flowing into Gaza since the ceasefire agreement, and will continue to work closely with international partners, the UN and other agencies as well as countries in the region to provide a sustained flow of assistance and facilitate access to food, water, medical care, fuel and shelter. The EU calls on all parties to fully abide by international law, including international humanitarian law.

The EU is committed to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace based on the two-state solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security. We will contribute to this objective through support to the Palestinian Authority to help it address its most pressing needs and support the reform agenda, and engagement with Israel and international partners in order to revive the political process. As part of the EU's long standing commitment to support Palestinians in need and in light of the latest developments in the region, the EU recently announced a new humanitarian aid package for Gaza and the West Bank worth €120 million. This brings total EU humanitarian assistance for the occupied Palestinian Territory to over €450 million since 2023. Total humanitarian financial support from Team Europe, i.e. from the EU and its Member States, to the occupied Palestinian Territory in 2023-2024 already amounted to more than €1.2 billion.

Thank you.