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### ANNEX

## **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe**

### **Exceptional Assistance Measure regarding Palestine\***

#### **1. IDENTIFICATION**

Action: Emergency Clearance of Conflict-Generated Debris in Gaza with Integrated Forensic Recovery

Action Reference: NDICI CR 2025 / 29 / ACT-63474

Cost: EUR 15 000 000 (Union contribution).

Budget Line: 14 02 03 10

Duration: Maximum 18 months. The authorising officer responsible may decide to extend this period twice by a further period of up to six months, up to a total maximum duration of 30 months, under the conditions laid down in Article 23(6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('the NDICI Regulation').

Lead service: FPI

#### **2. ACTION SUMMARY**

The 18-month measure seeks to support the emergency, risk-managed removal, recycling and reuse of conflict generated debris in Gaza, while ensuring the dignified recovery, forensic documentation and identification of human remains uncovered during debris-clearance operations. The action responds to the unprecedented scale of destruction following the 2023–2025 hostilities, which has generated more than 61 million metric tonnes of debris<sup>1</sup>, obstructing humanitarian access, disabling basic services, and creating severe safety, environmental and public-health risks

The action will prioritise clearance of debris from critical infrastructure, access routes, public facilities and residential areas, in close coordination with mine-action partners to mitigate explosive ordnance risks. In parallel, it will operationalise an integrated forensic component enabling the dignified recovery, documentation and identification of an estimated 10,000 missing persons (UN, June 2025) presumed trapped beneath collapsed structures, in line with

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\* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

<sup>1</sup> [UNDP \(2025\) "Clearing most of the rubble in the Gaza Strip is possible in seven years under the right conditions"](#)

international humanitarian, human-rights and accountability standards. The measure will restore access to essential services, support early recovery and livelihoods, reduce risks to civilians, and preserve critical evidence relevant for future accountability and transitional justice processes.

### **3. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

#### **3.1 BACKGROUND**

Since October 2023, Gaza has experienced catastrophic levels of destruction, with entire neighbourhoods flattened and essential civilian infrastructure rendered inoperative. According to United Nations assessments and satellite analysis, the conflict has generated an estimated around 61 million tonnes of debris<sup>2</sup>, creating extensive blockages to transportation networks, access routes and service corridors across the territory. The scale of destruction has had a profound impact on mobility. An estimated 1 500 km or more of roads are destroyed or severely damaged<sup>3</sup>, substantially impeding the movement of people, humanitarian cargo and emergency responders.

The humanitarian consequences of this destruction are immense. More than 1.9 million people, equivalent to approximately 85% of Gaza's population, remain internally displaced, many having been uprooted repeatedly as hostilities and infrastructure failure persist. A combination of overcrowded shelters, overstretched services, deteriorating sanitation and ongoing hazards from debris and unexploded ordnance (UXO) contribute to severe public-health threats and diminished living conditions for displaced communities.

In addition to these broad humanitarian impacts, there are also important legal and protection issues concerning the number of civilians still missing and believed to be trapped under collapsed structures. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports indicate that over 10,000 people remain missing under rubble, with new recoveries continuing as debris clearance expands. The presence of human remains, personal effects and other materials of potential evidentiary value underscores the complexity of debris-clearance operations, requiring both technical and forensic safeguards.

In the early recovery phase, debris clearance is critical to enabling safe access, restoring basic services and preparing land for transitional shelters. Systematic removal of rubble will facilitate the return of internally displaced persons, support the phased rehabilitation of electricity and WASH networks and enable the resumption of essential community functions. Moreover, longer-term reconstruction will place heavy demands on construction materials at a time when imports are constrained by high costs and logistical limitations; recycled debris will therefore be a key resource for cost-effective reconstruction if appropriate risk-managed systems and procedures are put in place.

The absence of a clear legal and forensic framework for debris management in Gaza represents an additional and significant challenge. Without defined procedures and institutional coordination, debris removal can result in unlawful appropriation of property, loss of ownership evidence, and disputes over compensation. More critically in a post-conflict context, human remains and potential forensic evidence, including items relevant to alleged violations of

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<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> [UNOSAT \(2024\) "Gaza Strip Road Network Comprehensive Damage Assessment"](#)

international humanitarian and human rights law, may be destroyed or mishandled, with adverse consequences for the rights of families to truth, death-notification and dignified burial, and for future accountability and transitional justice mechanisms.

**3.2 RATIONALE FOR CRISIS RESPONSE ACTIONS UNDER THE RAPID RESPONSE PILLAR OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT**

The scale, urgency and complexity of the debris and missing-persons crisis in Gaza constitute an exceptional and unforeseen situation in the sense of Article 4(4) point (a) of the NDICI Regulation. An adequate response cannot be provided under any other Union Instrument due to the urgency with which the funds are required and due to available resources already being firmly committed.

Annex IV, paragraph 1, second paragraph, points (a), (f), (g) and (j) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 specifically provides for the use of the NDICI rapid response pillar to support, (a) through the provision of technical and logistical assistance, the efforts undertaken by international, regional and local organisations and by State and civil society actors in promoting confidence-building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation, transitional justice, women’s and youth empowerment, in particular with regards to community tensions and protracted conflicts; (f) the reinforcement of State capacity - in the face of significant pressures to rapidly build, maintain or restore its core functions, and basic social and political cohesion; (g) measures necessary to start the rehabilitation and reconstruction of key infrastructure, housing, public buildings and economic assets, and essential productive capacity, as well as other measures for the re-starting of economic activity, the generation of employment and the establishment of the minimum conditions necessary for sustainable social development; and (j) measures to address, within the framework of Union cooperation policies and their objectives, the socio-economic impact on the civilian population of antipersonnel landmines, unexploded ordnance or explosive remnants of war, including, inter alia, risk education, mine detection and clearance and, in conjunction therewith, stockpile destruction.

**3.3 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Mitigation measure</b>
Escalation of violence or sudden changes in the security situation may restrict access to project sites, delay implementation, or suspend operations.	High	Continuous security monitoring and adherence to security management procedures and deconfliction mechanisms. Phased, area-based implementation allowing rapid relocation or re-sequencing of activities. Use of local implementing partners and remote management modalities where international access is restricted. Contingency planning for alternative sites and prioritisation of activities that can proceed under limited access.

<p>Presence of unexploded ordnance, unstable structures, and hazardous materials may result in injuries, casualties, or operational delays.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Mandatory explosive ordnance risk assessments prior to any debris-removal activities.</p> <p>Close operational coordination with UNMAS and mine-action partners for clearance, marking, and risk mitigation.</p> <p>Compulsory safety training, personal protective equipment (PPE), and standard operating procedures for all field personnel.</p> <p>Integration of risk education and community awareness to reduce civilian exposure.</p>
<p>Shortages of fuel, spare parts, and heavy machinery may disrupt operations and increase costs.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Advance procurement planning and prioritisation of critical equipment.</p> <p>Use of local suppliers and contractors where feasible to reduce dependency on cross-border logistics.</p> <p>Flexible operational planning to adjust sequencing of activities in response to resource constraints.</p> <p>Coordination with humanitarian partners and authorities to facilitate access for essential inputs.</p>
<p>Movement restrictions, permit delays, and administrative obstacles may impede field operations and slow implementation.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Continuous engagement with relevant authorities and coordination mechanisms to facilitate site access and approvals.</p> <p>Alignment with existing humanitarian coordination structures to ensure deconfliction and operational coherence.</p> <p>Maintenance of alternative operational modalities (direct implementation, partner-led delivery, and indirect management options) to adapt to evolving conditions.</p>
<p>Mishandling of human remains or loss of documentation during debris removal could undermine human dignity, families' rights, and future accountability mechanisms.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Integration of a dedicated forensic recovery and identification mechanism into all debris-removal operations.</p> <p>Development and enforcement of standard operating procedures for detection, recovery, documentation, and secure transfer of human remains.</p>

		<p>Training of all debris-removal teams on forensic awareness, legal obligations, and evidence preservation.</p> <p>Coordination with health, justice, civil protection, and human rights institutions to ensure a complete, rights-based forensic workflow.</p>
<p>The action may be perceived as politically sensitive or exposed to misuse of funds, fraud, or diversion in a high-risk environment.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Robust financial controls, procurement procedures, and regular monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Independent audits and expenditure verification where appropriate.</p> <p>Clear communication of the humanitarian, civilian-protection and rights-based nature of the action.</p>
<p>Resistance by affected communities or disputes over debris ownership, site access, or prioritisation may delay operations.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Community engagement, consultation and feedback mechanisms integrated into all stages of implementation.</p> <p>Transparent criteria for site selection and prioritisation.</p> <p>Inclusion of local actors, municipalities and civil society to foster trust and ownership.</p> <p>Grievance redress mechanisms to address complaints and disputes.</p>

## 4. OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the action is to restore safe access to basic services and enable early recovery for crisis-affected communities in Gaza, while reducing safety, environmental, and public-health risks associated with conflict generated debris.

### 4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 4.2.1 To remove and manage conflict generated debris in a risk-managed manner;
- 4.2.2 To recycle and reuse debris for early recovery and reconstruction-ready applications;
- 4.2.3 To strengthen operational coordination and capacities for effective debris management in a highly volatile context; and
- 4.2.4 To ensure the dignified recovery, identification, and documentation of human remains uncovered during debris-removal operations, in line with human rights and accountability standards.

## 5. ACTION COMPONENTS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

**The main expected results/outcomes include:**

**Expected Result (1):** Concrete rubble and non-concrete debris are removed and transferred in a risk-managed manner, in close collaboration with main action partners.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.1.1 Support risk-managed unexploded ordnance removal;
- 5.1.2 Provide risk education training and inclusive community awareness initiatives for all site project staff and neighbourhood residents;
- 5.1.3 Demolish, sort and remove debris from infrastructure, roads, network utilities, commercial facilities, and residential and public buildings;
- 5.1.4 Transport recyclable debris to established debris sites for stockpiling;
- 5.1.5 Transport and dispose non-recyclable debris to municipal dumping sites; and
- 5.1.6 Provide capacity development support, quality control, and supervision of infrastructure works.

**Expected Result (2):** Concrete debris is crushed and reused for early recovery activities.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.2.1 Establish and prepare storage and crushing site, and crush and sort crushed concrete debris;
- 5.2.2 Pave roads with the mix of crushed concrete debris tested for this purpose;
- 5.2.3 Supply transitional shelter with strong bases made of compacted layer of crushed concrete debris; and
- 5.2.4 Provide capacity building for partners in targeted communities to enhance service delivery and promote the sustainability of supported facilities.

**Expected Result (3):** Operational capacities and coordination for effective, efficient, and risk-managed debris management are improved.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.3.1 Establish and maintain a technical operating unit;
- 5.3.2 Purchase machinery and equipment for debris management;
- 5.3.3 Undertake inclusive community-based social cohesion initiatives, ensuring inclusion and participation of all community members, including women, youth, and persons with disabilities;
- 5.3.4 Supply fuel for operating the site equipment and trucks for transportation; and
- 5.3.5 Provide dignified short-term/temporary job opportunities for the site management and fuel monitoring.

**Expected Result (4):** Dignified recovery, forensic examination, and identification of human remains uncovered during debris operations are enabled.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.4.1 Establish the Gaza Forensic Recovery and Identification Center, including intake, cold storage, post-mortem documentation, and DNA sampling facilities;

- 5.4.2 Develop and implement standardised procedures for the detection, recovery, tagging, and secure transfer of human remains;
- 5.4.3 Map and assess risks in sites with likely human/hazards/archaeological remains;
- 5.4.4 Train debris-clearance teams, engineers, site supervisors, and community mobilisers;
- 5.4.5 Procure evidence documentation and safety kits;
- 5.4.6 Establish a missing persons registration platform at the Ministry of Justice and create a centralised, protected database to support identification processes;
- 5.4.7 Coordinate with relevant institutional actors to ensure a complete forensic workflow, including recovery, documentation, identification, and dignified burial;
- 5.4.8 Provide psychosocial, legal, and religiously appropriate support to families seeking information on missing relatives; and
- 5.4.9 Support transitional justice connected with forensics in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Waqf, including identifying potential contributions from satellite analysis and open-source methodologies.

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.1 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate Union rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>4</sup>.

#### 6.1.1 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity

This action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: solid presence in the field, strong financial, operational and coordination capacities, technical competences in rubble and debris removal management, and an established and solid network with local and national and international stakeholders.

#### 6.1.2 Changes from indirect to direct management mode (and vice versa) due to exceptional circumstances

##### (a) Purpose of the grant

The grant will contribute to achieving all of the objectives and expected results detailed in sections 4 and 5 above.

##### (b) Type of applicants targeted

The type of applicants targeted by this direct award are international and national non-governmental organisations and non-profit organisations.

##### (c) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because **the action entails crisis**

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<sup>4</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website, it is the OJ version that prevails.

**management aid as referred to in Article 198 (a) and as defined in Article 2(22) of the Financial Regulation** at the date of the Financing Decision.

## **6.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET**

The total Union contribution under this Financing Decision **will not exceed EUR 15 000 000**. A breakdown among components is provided hereunder, and is indicative.

### **Indicative budget breakdown**

<b>Components</b>	<b>Union contribution (amount in EUR)</b>	<b>Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified</b>
Component 1: Emergency Removal of Post-war Generated Debris in The Gaza Strip		
6.1.1. – Indirect management	15 000 000	N.A.
Total	15 000 000	N.A.

## **6.3 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The action shall be implemented under indirect management. It will be managed by the Commission, with the support of the Office of the European Union Representation (West Bank and Gaza Strip) for the monitoring of the action.

## **6.4 PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS MONITORING AND REPORTING**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final report. Each report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the Logframe matrix. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

## **6.5 EVALUATION**

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

The Commission may, during implementation, decide to undertake such an evaluation for duly justified reasons either on its own decision or on the initiative of the partner.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

## **6.6 AUDIT**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

## **6.7 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY**

The 2021-2027 programming cycle adopted a new approach to pooling, programming and deploying strategic communication and public diplomacy resources.

In line with the 2022 “[Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for External Actions](#)”, it will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing Union-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union’s support for their work by displaying the Union emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. This obligation will continue to apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, partner countries, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of Union member states.

## **7. COMPLEMENTARITY, COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

The action is fully aligned with DG MENA and DG ECHO humanitarian, stabilisation, and early recovery efforts in Gaza and complements ongoing humanitarian assistance, protection, WASH, shelter, and health interventions. It will be coordinated closely with UN agencies, international NGOs, and relevant coordination mechanisms to avoid duplication and ensure coherence.

Close coordination with the Office of the European Union Representation (West Bank and Gaza Strip) and the European Union Delegation in Israel will be maintained to ensure political coherence, alignment with EU priorities, and regular follow-up through progress reviews, donor coordination platforms, and joint field monitoring.

The intervention complements longer-term recovery and reconstruction planning by preparing cleared and serviced areas, generating reusable materials, and strengthening institutional and operational capacities relevant to future EU engagement. Continuous coordination with humanitarian, development, and accountability actors will ensure follow-up, sustainability, and integration into broader recovery frameworks.