

EN

ANNEX

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

Exceptional Assistance Measure regarding Israel and Palestine*

1. IDENTIFICATION

Action: Protection of civilians in Palestine and Israel

Action Reference: NDICI CR 2023/43

Reference:

Cost: EUR 20 000 000 (European Union (EU) 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.

Lead service: FPI

2. ACTION SUMMARY

The current conflict in Israel and Palestine is marked by unprecedented violence, loss of life, injury and destruction. As emphasized by EU leaders European Council on 26 October 2023, the EU maintains a unified stance unequivocally condemning in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel, emphasizing the imperative for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. The EU was clear that Israel had the right to defend itself in line with humanitarian and international law and reiterated the imperative of ensuring the protection of all civilians at all times, expressing its gravest concern about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Moreover, a key priority is to avoid regional spill-over, including in the West Bank and to engage with partners in this respect, including with the Palestinian Authority. The EU is very concerned about the situation in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), where there have been unparalleled levels of deadly settler violence and continued displacement of several Palestinian communities. The EU advocates for a two-state solution based on relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and international agreements as the only viable path to peace.

Numerous medical facilities have been damaged and affected by severe lack of even basic necessities for their operation. Repairs, resupplies, and humanitarian medical evacuations are

* 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.

imperative needs. Furthermore, the conflict continues to exact a heavy toll on the mental health of people living in Israel and Palestine. The prolonged exposure to violence and limited access to mental health resources for civilians, particularly children, causes high levels of trauma, anxiety, and depression. Disinformation and lack of trust fuel violence and pose a challenge to maintain hope for peace efforts that depend on access to reliable information. Furthermore, given the unprecedented levels of munitions deployed, the need for effective mine action will remain a challenge to human security, reconstruction and economic activity throughout the foreseeable future and will require international support. At the same time, the continued escalation of violence in the West Bank underlines the risk of the conflict spreading and underlines the importance of continued engagement to protect civilian populations' physical and mental safety as well as their legal rights.

This 18-month crisis response measure has the overarching goal of supporting efforts that alleviate the suffering of the most affected communities and assist in promoting lasting peace. Its first component seeks to assess the damage to health infrastructure and to protect civilians by providing life-saving support to essential health services as well as early warning and disease prevention activities. This component will also help address the vast needs in regard to mental health and psychosocial support for affected communities in Israel and Palestine. The second component aims to assist advocacy efforts towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict. It will also focus on countering disinformation, supporting fact checking to facilitate that public debate is based on reliable information and thereby contribute to an informed and constructive dialogue in support of a lasting peace. A third component will focus on humanitarian mine action, particularly on Digital Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (DEORE) messaging campaigns using social media platforms, and when the situation allows for it, establish explosive ordnance survey and clearance capacity, in particular around critical infrastructure, to facilitate safe movement and delivery of humanitarian aid. The fourth component will be on the West Bank, focusing on preventing conflict-related violence, ensuring physical safety and well-being, and providing legal services. The focus will be on equipping communities and individuals with skills and support to prevent violence and protect against human rights violations.

3. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

3.1 BACKGROUND

On 7 October 2023, war flared up once again in the Middle East. The appalling terrorist attack by Hamas, which the EU immediately condemned in the strongest possible terms, reignited a cycle of violence that escalated into a humanitarian tragedy in Gaza. The ongoing conflict has severely compromised the overall health system in Gaza. The unprecedented level of violence has resulted in extensive destruction and damage of medical facilities, impeding the ability to provide essential care to those in need. The strain on health services is further exacerbated by the tight blockade of the Gaza Strip causing acute shortage of medical supplies as well as medical personnel. This, coupled with mass displacement, overcrowding of shelters and damage to the water and sanitation infrastructure, raises fears of an imminent public health catastrophe.

The conflict has a profound psychological impact, creating a widespread need for trauma healing on both sides. Communities grapple with the enduring effects of violence, loss, and displacement, requiring comprehensive mental health support to address the emotional scars left by years of conflict. Particularly concerning is the impact on children, who often bear the

brunt of the trauma, facing long-term psychological consequences that demand specialized, long-term care.

Given the very high amounts of munitions and explosives deployed in the conflict, the Gaza Strip will be heavily contaminated by unexploded remnants of war and other explosive risks. This poses a severe direct threat to the civilian population and will impede delivery of humanitarian aid as well as reconstruction efforts. Addressing this risk will require long-term international cooperation and substantial resources.

The EU remains a staunch proponent for a two-state solution based on relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and international agreements as the only viable path to peace. Civil society engagement plays a crucial role in advocating for a two-state solution in Israel and in Palestine. These organizations often bridge divides, facilitate people-to-people interactions, and work towards building mutual understanding. Engaging with civil society opens up an opportunity to create an inclusive dialogue that amplifies the development of a peaceful coexistence between Israel and Palestine and advocates for a political resolution that accommodates the aspirations and rights of both sides.

Accurate and fact-checked information is imperative to a constructive dialogue which can ultimately achieve a just and lasting solution to the ongoing conflict. Fact-checking plays a critical role by providing a necessary countermeasure against the proliferation of misinformation and disinformation.

Finally, to reach a sustainable resolution of this longstanding conflict, it is essential to assist in strengthening civilian protection in the West Bank which is faced by unprecedented violence, as well as complete obstruction at checkpoints between Palestinian towns and closures and forced displacement of several communities, preventing entry or exit for patients, health personnel and ambulances.

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

The current conflict in Israel and Palestine is marked by unprecedented violence, loss of life and destruction, constituting an exceptional and unforeseen situation in the sense of Article 4(4) (a) of the NDICI Regulation. An adequate response cannot be provided under any other European 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, point(s) (a), (g), (j), (l), (m), (n), (p) and (q) of Regulation (EU) 2021/947 specifically provides for the use of the NDICI rapid response pillar to support (a) a situation of urgency, crisis, fragility, hybrid threats, emerging crisis or natural disasters, where relevant for stability, peace and security; (g) support for 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; (j) support for measures to address, within the framework of Union cooperation policies and their objectives, the socio-economic impact on the civilian population of anti-personnel landmines, unexploded ordnance or

explosive remnants of war. Activities financed under the Instrument may cover, inter alia, risk education, mine detection and clearance and, in conjunction therewith, stockpile destruction; (l) support for measures to ensure that the specific needs of women and children in crisis and conflict situations, including preventing their exposure to gender-based violence, are adequately met; (m) support for the rehabilitation and reintegration of the victims of armed conflict, including measures to address the specific needs of women and children; (n) support for measures to promote and defend respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, and the related international instruments; (p) support for measures to address the potential impact of sudden population movements with relevance to the political and security situation, including measures addressing the needs of host communities and (q) support for measures to promote the development and organisation of civil society and its participation in the political process, including measures to enhance the role of women in such processes and measures to promote independent, pluralist and professional media.

3.3 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measure
Impediments of access and deterioration of the security situation.	High	High	A monitoring and assessment mechanism, including security analysis, will be implemented to review the classification of zones on an ongoing basis to determine the appropriateness of response activities across the territory. Mitigation measures to reduce risk to staff – importation and use of equipment such as armoured vehicles, ballistic personal protective equipment.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measure
Risk of duplication of funding, and risk of internationalizing funding without involving local organizations, which might increase the likelihood of misalignment with community needs, potentially undermining the effectiveness and sustainability of humanitarian and development funding.	Medium	Medium	<p>The aim is to implement directly whenever possible, including through partners, and never duplicate existing systems, but rather reinforce and support systems. Localize the response to build and support local capacity, mobilize local partners, local professional networks and local contractors.</p> <p>Work within the established interagency coordination mechanisms.</p>
Risks associated with the management environment and the nature of the measures financed in the present context; particular care should be taken that funds can continue to be used for the stated purpose in accordance with the contractual provisions, that diversion is avoided and that no funds flow directly or indirectly to listed entities and individuals.			<p>Implement actions, including direct implementation, supervision and monitoring, to manage risks, including risk of aid diversion.</p> <p>Existing safeguards include the mechanism of ex-ante and ex-post checks under the PEGASE direct financial support to the Palestinian Authority, provisions of the pillar assessment of international organisations and Member States' agencies, the ex-ante checks of grant beneficiaries against international sanctions lists and the introduction of contractual clauses on anti-incitement, risk assessment as part of the annual control plan exercise.</p> <p>All actions will be implemented in full compliance with the European Commission review</p>

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation measure
			of ongoing financial assistance for Palestine ¹ .

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 OVERALL OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the action is to enhance protection of civilians in Palestine and Israel while advancing peaceful conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- 4.2.1 To improve access to healthcare services, including psychosocial support, for civilians in Palestine and Israel.
- 4.2.2 To strengthen social cohesion and trust-building by promoting peaceful conflict resolution and improved ability to discern and counter disinformation.
- 4.2.3 To increase awareness about risks and safety related to unexploded remnants of war thereby reducing casualties.
- 4.2.4 To strengthen protection of civilians in West Bank and help reduce instances of human rights violations.

5. ACTION COMPONENTS AND EXPECTED RESULTS

The main expected results/outcomes include:

Expected Result (1): Improved access to healthcare services.

Activities (indicative):

¹ Commission Communication C(2023) 8300

- 5.1.1 Support and maximise the capacity of existing operational hospitals and primary health centres with personnel, medications and other health products and specialised care teams.
- 5.1.2 Complementary to the existing health system, deploy specialised emergency medical teams and establishing temporary facilities, including field hospitals, where needed.
- 5.1.3 Develop referral pathways within the Gaza Strip and medical evacuation pathways outside Gaza.
- 5.1.4 Assess and address immediate infrastructure restoration needs.
- 5.1.5 Implement counselling and therapy programmes for trauma survivors.
- 5.1.6 Train local mental health professionals for sustained support.

Expected Result (2): Promoting peaceful conflict resolution.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.2.1 Swift identification and analysis of false narratives, providing real-time, contextualised and verified content.
- 5.2.2 Collaborate with local media outlets to verify and disseminate accurate information
- 5.2.3 Facilitate community dialogues and peacebuilding workshops.
- 5.2.4 Engage with the local leadership and public in efforts (e.g., through research, policy analysis, advocacy, public campaigns, etc.) to promote a negotiated settlement of the conflict based on the model of the Two-State Solution.
- 5.2.5 Establish platforms for inter-community communication and collaboration.

Expected Result (3): Increased awareness about risks and safety related to unexploded remnants of war.

Activities (indicative):

- 5.3.1 Conduct mine risk education workshops and training sessions.
- 5.3.2 Conduct explosive remnants of war (ERW) risk assessments of damaged infrastructure prior to use by UN entities and civilians, deliver explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) messages, explosive ordnance survey and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).
- 5.3.3 Assess the level of ERW contamination and continue to assist the Palestinian Authority in its response.
- 5.3.4 Work with UN and other humanitarian partners to support the (re-)establishment of referral pathways to treatment and psychosocial support for ERW victims.

Expected Result (4): Strengthened protection of civilians in West Bank

Activities (indicative):

- 5.4.1 Establish and promote community-based protection networks.
- 5.4.2 Advocate for human rights and legal protections.
- 5.4.3 Provide training on reporting and responding to rights violations.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 IMPLEMENTATION MODALITIES

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures².

6.1.1 Grant: direct award (direct management)

(a) Purpose of the grant

The grant will contribute to achieving the objectives as presented in sections 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.4 and the expected results 1, 2 and 4 presented in sections 5.

(b) Type of applicants targeted

The types 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 management aid as referred to in Article 195(a) and as defined in Article 2(21) of the Financial Regulation at the date of the Financing Decision.

6.1.2 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: mandate to facilitate the delivery of health and other life-saving health supplies, proven technical expertise and capacity to promote coordination on humanitarian and health issues, capacity in stakeholder engagement and advocacy and established relationships with relevant authorities and key stakeholders. The implementation by this entity entails achieving part of the objective 4.2.1 and expected result 1 in section 5.

6.1.3 Indirect management with a pillar assessed entity

A part of this action may be implemented in indirect management with an entity which will be selected by the Commission's services using the following criteria: partner having a solid presence in the field, with a strong operational capacity in terms of human resources, technical competences and an established institutional network with local and national authorities, previous experience in providing demining assistance and cooperation with the responsible entities on the ground is required. The implementation by this entity entails the contribution to stability and strengthened human security by assisting in ERW clearance, conducting mine risk education campaigns. The implementation by this entity entails achieving the objective 4.2.3 and expected result 3 in section 5.

² 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.

6.2 INDICATIVE BUDGET

The total European Union contribution under this Financing Decision **will not exceed EUR 20 000 000**. A breakdown among components is provided hereunder, and is indicative.

Indicative budget breakdown

Components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)	Indicative third party contribution, in currency identified
Specific objective 4.2.1: to improve access to healthcare services, including psychosocial support, for civilians in Palestine and Israel.		
Indirect management	6 500 000	N/A
Direct grant (direct management)	2 500 000	N/A
Specific objective 4.2.2: to strengthen social cohesion and trust-building by promoting peaceful conflict resolution and improve ability to discern and counter false information.		
Direct grant (direct management)	2 000 000	N/A
Direct grant (direct management)	2 000 000	N/A
Direct grant (direct management)	2 000 000	
Specific objective 4.2.3: to increase awareness about risks and safety related to unexploded remnants of war thereby reducing casualties.		
Indirect management	3 000 000	N/A
Specific objective 4.2.4: to strengthen protection of civilians in West Bank and help reduce instances of human rights violations.		
Direct grant (direct management)	2 000 000	N/A
Total	20 000 000	

6.3 ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The action shall be implemented under direct management for part of objective 4.2.1, objectives 4.2.2 and 4.2.4 and indirect management for part of objective 4.2.1 and objective 4.2.3. It will be devolved and sub-delegated to the **European Union Delegation in Israel and European Union Delegation in Jerusalem** with the support of the Commission for the conclusion of the contracts implementing 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, a final 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.

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

6.7 COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

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

It will remain a contractual obligation for all entities implementing EU-funded external actions to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU 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 EU member states.

The 2022 "Communicating and Raising EU Visibility: Guidance for external actions" reference document shall be used to establish the appropriate contractual obligations.

7. COMPLEMENTARITY, COORDINATION AND FOLLOW-UP

This action will be implemented in coordination with relevant EU stakeholders, in particular Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) and the European External Action Service (EEAS), as well as with other relevant EU actions which aim to address the current situation in Israel and Palestine. A careful coordination among these Commission services and the EEAS and programmes will be ensured in order to benefit from a high level of complementarity and to facilitate an appropriate response and follow up. In addition, the action will underpin the EU's diplomatic, political, and operational efforts, including the European Peace Day Effort³, and will be closely coordinated with all relevant actors.

Regular reporting from implementing partners to the EU Delegations will be warranted so that complementarity with EU-funded actions can be ensured, and valuable insights shared with EU Member States.

³ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/node/433505_fr