Palestine, refugees: 9th EC-UNRWA Convention 1996-1998 prior to signature of the Convention

1996/0154(CNS) - 07/10/1996 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: the Decision is aimed at the conclusion of a Ninth Convention between the EC and UNRWA for the Community contribution to UNRWA's regular programme of education and health services, and its special programme of food aid (1996-1998). COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Decision 96/626/EC concerning the conclusion of the Convention between the Community and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) concerning aid to refugees in the countries of the Near East. SUBSTANCE: the Convention is approved on behalf of the Community and contains the following elements: - commitment by the Community to continue its aid, which will take the form of contributions in kind or in cash extending over a three-year period, for use under the UNRWA Education and Health Programmes (including family planning projects) to a total amount of Mecu 105.9 from 1996 to 1998. A precise breakdown of the amounts by type of project is provided for in the Convention, with the possibility of allocating such amounts differently according to requirements and subject to Commission approval: Mecu 34.1 in 1996, Mecu 35.3 in 1997 and Mecu 36.5 in 1998. The aid is broken down as follows: .education programme (Mecu 88.3): the objective of this programme is to meet the basic educational needs of Palestine refugees (education provided to 400.000 pupils); .general health programme (Mecu 10.8): this programme is community-based (983.000 refugees in March 1995) and places the emphasis on primary health care; .other contributions to the health programme (Mecu 6.8): family planning, control of non-communicable diseases, containment of hospital services costs, environmental health, nutrition. - The UNRWA is required to inform the Community of the use made of the Community contribution and of any significant changes that may be planned in the education or health services provided by the Agency. If necessary, the Community could withdraw its agreement on the use of the funds. -As regards food aid programmes, the amounts and characteristics of the commodities provided will be subject to separately agreed financing conditions, based on annual requests from UNRWA. The execution of the food programmes is governed by the Regulation on Community food aid [Regulation (EC) No 1292/96]. - Provision is made for financial control of the activities financed by the Community. - At the end of 1997, the Palestine refugees' situation will be reviewed and an evaluation made of plans formulated and implemented by UNRWA, for a possible handover of its functions to the Palestinian Council or any other body. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 7 October 1996. The President of the Council will designate the persons empowered to sign the Convention in order to bind the Community. The Convention covers the years 1996-1997-1998.