

Trump Cuts Off U.S. Humanitarian Aid to Palestine

Signs Into Law Bill to Cut Off Aid to Palestinian Authority.

By [Press TV](#)

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US President Donald Trump has signed into law legislation that halts some aid to the Palestinian Authority until it stops paying Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and the families of those killed by Israeli forces.

Trump cut the Palestinian aid as he approved the massive \$1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill on Friday.

The law includes three exceptions, allowing for US aid to Palestinian water and childhood vaccination programs, as well as to East Jerusalem al-Quds hospitals.

PA, Hamas hit back

The Palestinian Authority has denounced the law, vowing to continue payments to families of Palestinians “martyrs and prisoners.”

Yusef al-Mahmoud, spokesperson for the Ramallah-based PA government, said that the

“martyrs and prisoners are, in the eyes of our people, sacred symbols of freedom and struggle and opposition to humiliation and surrender.”

He noted that Washington should instead have called for “ending the occupation and suffering of the Palestinian people.”

Congress, the spokesman added, should also make aid to Israel conditional on “ending its occupation and settlements because it’s the occupation that is responsible for killing our people and throwing them into prison.”

Sami Abu Zuhri, the spokesman for Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, also condemned the law.

Relations between the US and Palestine have been strained since December 2017 when Trump recognized Jerusalem al-Quds as Israel’s capital and vowed to relocate the US embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to the occupied city.

Jerusalem al-Quds remains at the core of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, with Palestinians hoping that the eastern part of the city would eventually serve as the capital of a future independent Palestinian state.

In January, the US administration decided to cut its financial contribution to the United Nations' Relief and Welfare Agency (UNRWA) that renders aid to Palestinian refugees.

The US State Department announced that Washington would hold back 65 million dollars to UNRWA – more than half its planned contribution this year – and demanded that the agency make unspecified reforms.

UNRWA was established by the UN General Assembly in 1946, one year after the creation of the Israeli regime.

More than half of the two million people in the Gaza Strip depend on support from UNRWA or other humanitarian organizations.

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