



Vienna International Institute for Middle East Studies

VIIMES INITIATIVE IN SUPPORT OF UNRWA

The recent decision by some western countries to suspend their financial support to UNRWA at this historical juncture is perceived as a collective punishment of Palestinians who are facing blanket bombardments, starvation, and disease, as the world is witnessing during last 110 day.

Regrettably, this is another serious setback to the United Nations actions already paralyzed by those who are thwarting the emergence of ceasefire leading to lasting peace.

As stated by the UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini: "Suspension of funds threatens humanitarian work in the region, especially in Gaza, as Gaza faces the risk of mass starvation".

Surprisingly, the alleged accusations against some UNRWA staff appeared in the wake of the ICJ interim decision on the South Africa's claim on Genocide committed by Israel in Gaza.

VIIMES calls on the United Nations Member States to pursue their indefectible support to all relevant agencies for humanitarian assistance particularly to UNRWA who is facing unprecedented dramatic situation with the devastating ongoing war in Gaza.

In this context, VIIMES urges all Member States to remain faithful to the universal goals of the UN Charter. Member States who decided to suspend their financial contribution are called to refrain using their political motivations as leverage for punishment of both civilian Palestinians and the UN, especially UNRWA.

It has to be recalled that following the horrific death of over 102 UNRWA's staff in Gaza, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said, "They will never be forgotten". In fact, the UNRWA is acting on the behalf of the world public who are determined to provide humanitarian aid but cannot have access to Gaza. Therefore, the role of the UNRWA in helping Palestinians, deprived from decency and dignity every human being needs in lifetime, is very vital.

VIIMES urges all Member States to unite efforts at the UNGA, including under the UNSC "Uniting for Peace", with the aim to adopting a Resolution that will allocate part of the regular budget of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations to UNRWA in order to allow an assured and predictable budget.

From this perspective, VIIMES calls on all lovers of peace and justice to support this common endeavour which is urgently needed for the Palestinian people who aspires to live in peace in the independent State of Palestine.