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**SIGNATURE OF THE EC-UNRWA CONVENTION ON AID TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEES**

The European Community has signed a new Convention with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). The aim of the Convention is to continue the programme of aid for 3.3 million Palestine refugees in UNRWA's five fields of operation: Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip. UNRWA's feeding, health-care and education programmes are very significant.

The aid is to extend over a three year period and will amount to 106m ecu. Other Community food aid resources could also be mobilized to meet the specific needs of vulnerable groups.

The EC-UNRWA Convention makes up one part of the framework of the European Union's policy on the Middle East Peace Process of supporting the efforts of the parties to reach a peaceful resolution of their differences. A key element of this strategy remains that of reassuring the Palestinians that the international community believes that the Declaration of Principles should be fully respected.