

UN Renews Agency Helping Palestinian Refugees in Defiance of US

Most countries renewed the mandate of the United Nations Relief Agency for Palestine Refugees.

By [Telesur](#)

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With 169 votes in favor, nine abstentions, and two votes against, the [United Nations General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#) Friday extended the mandate for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) until June 30, 2023.

“The General Assembly... expresses special commendation to the Agency for the essential role that it has played for almost seven decades since its establishment in providing vital services for the well-being, human development and protection of the Palestine refugees and the amelioration of their plight and for the stability of the region,” the UN resolution states.

Favorable reactions to the UNGA decision were immediate, especially among those who know from their own experience [the consequences of the Israeli military occupation](#).

“We welcome the decision to renew the international mandate to UNRWA and we see it as another failure to hostile U.S. policies to the Palestinian rights,” the Hamas spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri said.

When most people picture [#Bethlehem](#) this time of year, they don't imagine these scenes - refugee camps, 8m high walls, & Israeli military checkpoints. Yet this is what Oisín McConville saw when he visited the 'little town' of Bethlehem in [#Palestine](#). <https://t.co/84yKTwcDuA>
[pic.twitter.com/7ER0hFg8vM](https://t.co/84yKTwcDuA)

— Trócaire (@trocaire) [December 13, 2019](#)

Established in 1949, the UN humanitarian agency provides housing, education, health, relief services, and microfinance assistance to more than 5 million Palestinian refugees who are currently living in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem.

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) spokeswoman **Hanan Ashrawi** also praised the vote and said it was the UN's responsibility to combat the U.S. and Israeli attacks on Palestinian refugees.

“All attempts at trying to limit the mandate of the UNRWA, defund it or attack

it have failed, and we hope that the international community will continue to come to the rescue," she said.

The U.S. and Israel, which have been leading a smear campaign accusing UNRWA of mismanagement and anti-Israeli incitement, voted against the resolution entitled "Assistance to Palestine Refugees."

The nine abstentions came from Cameroon, Canada, Guatemala, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, and Vanuatu.

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