EU to condition UNRWA funds on removing incitement from PA textbooks

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The European Union parliament said it will condition the funds received by the UN Palestinian refugees' agency on removal of incitement against Israel from Palestinian text books.

The European Parliament’s Budget panel approved on Tuesday an amendment to withhold 20 million Euros in aid to The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) if immediate changes are not made to the curriculum taught in its schools, which allegedly includes anti-Israel rhetoric and incitement of violence.

“The reserve of EUR 20 million will be released by the next academic school year if substantive positive changes are made in the Palestinian Authority curriculum that promote coexistence and tolerance with the Jewish-Israeli ‘other and peace education with Israel in alignment with the goals of the two-state solution,” the approved amendment 4083 said.

“Should there be no change, appropriations in reserve shall be used for funding Palestinian NGOs that have a proven track record of promoting educational initiatives in school settings for children designed to foster tolerance, coexistence and respect towards the Jewish-Israeli ‘other,'” the amendment added.

“Hate speech, anti-Semitism and incitement to violence in Palestinian Authority and UNRWA textbooks have still not been removed. The EP decisions insisted that EU-funded salaries of education civil servants who draft Palestinian textbooks must be made conditional on material reflecting values of peaces, tolerance, coexistence,” the justification for the amendment noted.

Brussels is the PA’s largest single donor - paying the salaries of its civil servants, including those who design PA curricula - and sent over $157 million in aid to UNRWA in 2021.

In April, the European Parliament for the first time in its history passed a resolution condemning UNRWA for inciting hatred in its curricula and demanding that the content be “removed immediately.”

The rare decision came after activity by the Israeli IMPACT-se research, policy and advocacy organization which published extensive studies on the negative and anti-Semitic nature of UNRWA’s teaching materials. The studies show that UNRWA is teaching Arab students in its schools to reject the peace negotiations with Israel while promoting anti-Semitism, encouraging jihad, and glorifying terrorists and terrorism.

A report by the watchdog from January showed that PA school textbooks have “consistently shown a systematic insertion of violence, martyrdom and jihad across all grades and subjects.”