



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL EXTERNAL RELATIONS

DIRECTORATE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN
Mashrak and Israel

22. X. 99 026154

Brussels,
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NOTE TO THE FILE

Subject: Ad-hoc Selection Committee for People to People/Permanent Status Issues projects in support of the Middle East peace process, budget line B7-4100

Reference: Minutes of the Selection Committee meeting held on 29 September 1999

Background

As part of the Financing Proposal "Middle East Peace Projects" (ME8/B7-4100/IB/98/0417) that was approved by the MED-Committee and adopted by the Commission through written procedure on 29 June 1999, a global allocation of € 5 million has been made available for a number of "People to People" projects supporting co-

8. Economic Co-operation Foundation (ECF): *Towards a Permanent Status Agreement and Beyond: Policy Planning and People-to-People*, Permanent Status Issues and People to People, EC contribution € 400,000 (= 100% of total project)

Mr Duplá informed the Committee about the background of the applicant: the ECF is a high-level think-tank led by Prof. Yair Hirschfeld who initiated the Oslo talks in 1993. He is a close associate of Yossi Beilin, now Minister of Justice in the new Israeli government and a key figure among the pro-peace politicians in Israel. The ECF had been supported by the Commission in the past, with good results. This project would have the potential to produce concrete proposals for solutions in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian permanent status negotiations. This would be done by establishing an informal dialogue with Israeli, Palestinian, US, European, Jordanian and Egyptian policy makers to develop workable concepts for the permanent status between Israelis and Palestinians; preparation of blueprints on the outstanding issues for peace, such as Jerusalem –focusing on the development of planning, zoning and power-sharing concepts; Refugees – articulating a comprehensive political, economic and legal concept for the final settlement of the refugee problem; Security –conceptualizing an over-arching approach on Israeli-Palestinian security and border issues; Economic Relations in Permanent Status - including concepts on the future border regime, incorporating economic and security dimensions; and future regional architecture. People to People: develop an intense Israeli-Palestinian Jerusalem in Peace partnership and cooperation.

Mr Zangl and Mr Dawson asked why the project would receive 100% EU funding without any other donor support. Mr de Ojeda replied that the ECF would be in real need of the funds and that other donors might pledge additional support in the future. The Committee then agreed that EU funding should not exceed 80% of the total budget as a general rule. Also, the current audit of an earlier ECF project funded under the MEDA Micro-actions would have to be completed before signing a new contract. Subject to these conditions being met, the Committee approved the project.