

# *Palestinians Demonstrate in Gaza, Protesting UN Budget Cuts*

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Gaza City, August 25 (RHC)-- Thousands of Palestinians, affiliated with a United Nations agency, have taken to the streets in the besieged Gaza Strip to protest against a recent budget cut announced by the UN body.

On Monday, Palestinians working for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) staged a strike outside the UNRWA headquarters in Gaza to show their anger at the budget cut and the reduction of UN's educational programs.

According to reports, the strike was the largest in a string of protests against the UN's decision as over 13,000 teachers, health workers and other employees took part.

The demonstrators called on UNRWA officials to revoke the decision, which would overcrowd the UN-sponsored classrooms and also send the employees to compulsory one-year unpaid leave. The new measures have reportedly increased the number of Palestinian students to 50 in each class.

The strike left UN-sponsored schools closed while the schools run by the Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas, that controls the Gaza Strip, started the scholastic year on Monday.

The UNRWA, a UN agency which was established in 1949, is tasked with providing assistance and protection to a population of some five million registered Palestine refugees. The agency, whose budget

mainly relies on voluntary contributions by donors, currently faces a budget deficit of some USD 106 million.

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