UNRWA chief suspended amid corruption probe

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The chief of the United Nations agency responsible for maintaining relief efforts for the descendants of Palestinian Arab refugees has been temporarily removed from his position, pending the outcome of an internal probe into allegations of misconduct.

On Wednesday, Pierre Krahenbuhl, Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) took a leave of absence from his position, UNRWA announced, while the organization investigates claims of corruption and misconduct within UNRWA under his watch.

“The Commissioner-General has stepped aside until the completion of the process. The UN Secretary-General has appointed Mr. Christian Saunders as the Officer-In-Charge for the interim period,” an UNRWA statement said.

[In July](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/266636), AFP revealed that senior UNRWA officials, including Krahenbuhl, were under investigation for "credible and corroborated" allegations of serious ethical abuses.

An internal ethics report obtained by AFP cited claims of "sexual misconduct, nepotism, retaliation, discrimination, and other abuses of authority, for personal gain, to suppress legitimate dissent, and to otherwise achieve their personal objectives."

[Days after the report](http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/266696), Switzerland announced that it was suspending funding of UNRWA.