**Switzerland and the Netherlands suspend funding for UN aid agency for Palestinians over graft scandal**

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The Netherlands and Switzerland announced the suspension of funding for UNRWA, the United Nations’ aid agency for Palestinians.

The suspensions, announced by both countries on Tuesday, followed a damning report alleging corruption on the organization’s highest levels.

An internal report leaked Monday alleged both graft and sexual misconduct of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which was thrown into crisis after the United States last year announced it would no longer fund it. The allegations are now being scrutinized by UN investigators.

Switzerland’s suspension will impact money slated for 2020, not the $22.5 million already earmarked for 2019, Swiss officials told media there. The Netherlands, which funds UNRWA to the tune of about $15 million annually, will suspend its contributions “until we get satisfactory answers,” Sigrid Kaag, the Netherlands’ minister for international aid, told the NOS broadcaster.

A copy of the damning report obtained by AFP describes “credible and corroborated” allegations of serious ethical abuses, including involving UNRWA’s top official, Commissioner-General Pierre Krahenbuhl.

It says the allegations include senior management engaging in “sexual misconduct, nepotism, retaliation, discrimination and other abuses of authority, for personal gain, to suppress legitimate dissent, and to otherwise achieve their personal objectives.”

The American decision caused a financial shortfall of $446 million in the agency’s budget of $1.2 billion. Before the scandal was exposed, Krahenbuhl said he expected to end 2019 with a deficit of at least $211 million.